

Université de Genève
Institut Universitaire de Hautes Etudes Internationales

AFRICAN CULTURAL IDENTITY AND
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS:
ANALYSIS OF GHANAIAN AND NIGERIAN
SOURCES 1958–1974

THÈSE

présentée à l'Université de Genève
pour l'obtention du grade de Docteur ès Sciences Politiques

par

SIBUSISO MANDLENKOSI EMMANUEL BENGU

Republique de l'Afrique du Sud
(Zululand)

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ANALYSIS OF GHANAIAN AND NIGERIAN
SOURCES 1958 - 1974

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presented to the University of Ghana

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La Commission mixte, composée des doyens des Facultés de droit, des lettres, et des sciences économiques et sociales, et du directeur de l'Institut universitaire de hautes études internationales, sur le préavis de M. Jacques FREYMOND, professeur à l'Université et à l'Institut, de M. Roy PREISWERK, professeur à l'Institut, de M. Ofori AKYEA, *Research fellow, Institute of African Studies*, Université du Ghana, et de M. Pierre BUNGENER, Directeur de l'Institut d'études du développement (Genève), autorise l'impression de la présente Thèse, sans entendre par là exprimer d'opinion sur les propositions qui y sont énoncées.

Genève, le 12 mars 1975

Pour la Commission mixte :

Jacques FREYMOND

Directeur de l'Institut universitaire

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PREFACE

In his novel *Le vieux nègre et la médaille*, Ferdinand Oyono describes the drama of an old man who, having devoted his life to France, in the end fails to be accepted as a real Frenchman.¹⁾ Two of his sons died in a European war for what he thought a just and legitimate cause and he offered his land to the missionaries. When he was finally invited to receive his medal, he imagined the ceremony to be not just a formal recognition of his dedication, but complete acceptance of him by the tenants of colonial power. Despite the discrimination he suffered and the ridicule to which he was exposed on the occasion, he never fully grasped his tragic failure to be assimilated. Only after continued humiliation did he begin to understand the futility of his lifelong efforts to please the colonizer.

Often, the opportunity given to the "natives" of French colonies to be assimilated into the culture of the colonizer was seen as a sign of non-discriminatory policies. It found ideological legitimacy through being an act of generosity. But what did it really mean? Accepting an alien culture implied the almost complete renegation of one's own values, patterns of behavior and views of the world. Nothing less than cultural suicide. At this price, cultural assimilation carried its rewards, such as political positions or whatever jobs were available in the "other" society. But there was an ultimate barrier to the culturally assimilated: racial discrimination in various forms. Frantz Fanon has correctly analyzed the illusion of complete assimilation as far back as 1952.²⁾

African novels and poems of the colonial period depict the failure of the colonizer to establish mutually rewarding intercultural relations. The destruction of other cultures was part and parcel of political control and economic domination. When independence came, with all the sweet words about liberation and freedom, it should have been clear to anyone who ever read novels and poetry (other sources and direct experience notwithstanding) that the *international* relationship between the former colonizer and the new States could be nothing but continued political control and economic domination, as long as no genuinely creative and beneficial *intercultural* relationship was found. Cultural domination (read: the imposition of development patterns, consumer habits or simply

1) Ferdinand Oyono, *Le vieux nègre et la médaille*, Paris, Julliard, 1956.

2) Frantz Fanon, *Peau noire, masques blancs*, Paris, Seuil, 1952.

values) continues to be a part, or even a condition, of a relationship marked by inequality.

The encounter of different cultures and its relevance to interstate relations is *the* unwritten chapter in our textbooks on international relations. Although the process of formal decolonization is almost complete, analysts have not yet grasped the significance of cultural diversity in today's world. They still are essentially prisoners of an ethnocentric view of the world, which includes the more or less conscious image of all societies moving gradually towards a single and exclusive societal model.

Political science is in dire need of a general theory of intercultural relations as part of the study of international relations. The decision to embark on virgin land and to attempt even a limited case study in a theoretical void is in itself a proof of one of the major qualities Sibusiso Bengu expresses in his unassuming ways: courage!

The search for cultural identity is the central theme of Dr. Bengu's work. This is not normally a pre-occupation of students of international relations who, if they stumble across the issue at all, consider it irrelevant enough for anthropologists and social psychologists to worry about.

However, our prediction is that the problem will, so to speak, explode in the faces of analysts of international relations in the years to come. One of the main reasons for this is the growing disenchantment with development strategies applied since the end of the forties. The idea is slowly emerging that different development patterns must be invented to suit different cultures. Most recent documents on development, such as the Cocoyoc Declaration and the Second Club of Rome Report, acknowledge such a principle.

Cultural identity is an important element not only in the search for an appropriate development strategy. It has also much to do with the struggle against foreign political control and economic domination. It should suffice to quote here Amilcar Cabral's unambiguous statement: "Culture has proved to be the very foundation of the liberation movement. Only societies which preserve their culture are able to mobilize and organize themselves and fight against foreign domination."³)

A word of caution is needed here. Acknowledgement of the failure of assimilationist colonial policies should not be seen as an argument in favour of a policy of segregation or separate development. Cultural diversity does not imply the need for physical segregation on the basis of race. I am merely saying that references to cultural diversity should not serve as an apology for racism, but that cultural suicide is no substitute for the African, since assimilation, again because of racism, is never complete. What I positively stand for is a genuine recognition of cultural differences, a respect for attempts made by different societies to devise development strategies suited to their cultural patterns without

³) Amilcar Cabral, "The Role of Culture in the Struggle for Independence", *Objective: Justice*, 1974, Vol. 6, No. 1, p. 9.

being constantly told by Europeans that the Western societal model is in the final analysis the only possible one. As Chinua Achebe puts it, the African destiny "does not include a future European identity for which the present is but an apprenticeship."⁴

The choice of literary works as source material for the study of intercultural relations is an obvious one. The conflict of cultures is the dominant theme of contemporary African literature.⁵

How that conflict affects the political scene is *explicitly* dealt with by some authors. True, other sources are also relevant in this respect. Presidential speeches or development plans contain value statements and reflect images of a future society. But the deeper implications of the culture conflict remain latent and *implicit*. To bring them to the surface presupposes the availability of a theory of intercultural relations which has come to grips with the dilemma of ideological options.

Novels and poems are one of the most important, sometimes the only, means of expressing political dissent. Most African authors pursue such a purpose consciously and, we believe, constructively. Kofi Awoonor states that an "African writer must be a person who has some kind of conception of the society in which he is living and the way he wants the society to go."⁶ He is usually very critical and sometimes bitter about the present state of affairs. This makes his writing all the more important to the study of contemporary African politics.

Dr. Bengu will certainly be criticised for the methodological stance he takes. He admits frankly that his approach is not in line with prevailing opinions among today's empirical social science researchers. In fact, what he attempts to present is his own *intuitive* grasp of the *subjective* views which African authors hold of their countries and of the relationship between Africa and the outside world. Subjectivity on two levels: what heresy! But such criticism is out of place if the idea behind it is that quantitative content analysis would have eliminated the writer's subjectivity or that sociological methods of opinion research (with sampling, questionnaires and all) would have done the trick. Many products of such research, particularly on Africa, go under the label of objectivity, yet they hardly conceal the affective and ideological components of the initial projects.

This is too vast and passionate a debate to be dealt with here.⁷ I would merely venture to say that Bengu has succeeded in presenting

4) Chinua Achebe, *Morning Yet on Creation Day*, London, Heinemann, 1975, p. 7.

5) "Now, with a new political and esthetic freedom, the literature of Africa is returning to the stream of the past to find those themes that illuminate the past as well as the present—and perhaps will provide some light for the path of the future." Charlotte Brooks (Ed.), *African Rhythms*, New York, Washington Square Press, 1974, p. 174.

6) in Per Wästberg (Ed.), *The Writer in Modern Africa*, New York, Holmes and Meier, 1969, p. 31.

7) Some aspects of the question appear in Roy Preiswerk and Dominique Perrot, *Ethnocentrisme et Histoire: L'Afrique, l'Amérique indienne et l'Asie dans les manuels occidentaux*, Paris, Anthropos, 1975.

results that are *pertinent*, which is more than some of the so-called objective researchers have managed to do. Pertinence is a vague and evasive concept.⁸⁾ Whether the result of a particular research project is pertinent depends on the viewpoint of the reader. Subjectivity on a third level: more heresy? May be so, but the impression remains that an uninformed reader, with no cultural empathy for Africa, will probably miss the main point about the relevance of culture conflict and cultural diversity to the foreign relations of African countries. Bengu did not explicitly state many of the possible connections between intercultural and international relations. The empathic reader will easily "see" them.

One illustration of the pertinence of Bengu's results is with respect to the topic of self-colonization. By this we mean the voluntary mental subordination to a foreign cultural model. In the course of interviews conducted in West Africa, Bengu found no sympathy at all for such an idea. In most cases, it was bluntly rejected as being completely unreal. Yet most of the novels examined by him deal with the issue in one way or the other! Even if this is done without elaborate conceptualization, it is nevertheless indicative of an important element in the relationship between Africa and the West (including Eastern Europe). One author, Chinua Achebe, admits this explicitly when he speaks of a type of African who, under an "illusion of objectivity" or for "perverse charitableness", cuts his own throat for the comfort and good opinion of Europeans.⁹⁾ "Colonialism . . . , despite many setbacks survives into our own day, and indeed is ready again at the end of a quiescent phase of self-doubt for a new resurgence of proselytisation, even, as in the past, *among its prime victims!*"¹⁰⁾

From such observations flows his commitment to a cause: "Here then is an adequate revolution for me to espouse—to help my society regain belief in itself and put away the complexes of the years of denigration and *self-abasement*."¹¹⁾ This is indeed one of the essential conditions of a new intercultural rapport with the West. The other condition is for Westerners to develop a less self-centered view of the world which inevitably places them in a position of superiority.

It should be clear by now what Dr. Bengu is *not* trying to do in his research. First, he does not indulge in any kind of literary criticism. Whether a particular work is well-written or up to standards (whoever defines these) of contemporary writing is totally outside Bengu's pre-occupations. His interest is not in art for art's sake, but in the political significance of cultural identity. Second, his ambition is not to present us with a description of post-independence Ghana and Nigeria. Whether,

8) It has nevertheless found its way into linguistics. See Luis Prieto, *Pertinence et pratique; Essai de sémiologie*, Paris, Ed. de Minuit, 1975.

9) "Thoughts on the African Novel", in *Morning Yet on Creation Day*, p. 51.

10) "Colonialist Criticism", *ibid*, p. 12. The italics are ours.

11) "The Novelist as Teacher", *ibid*, p. 44. The italics are ours.

for instance, Ayi Kwei Armah gives an adequate image of Ghanaian society today is not what Bengu intends to determine.¹²⁾ The way writers describe the society they live in is indicative of the identity crisis that thoughtful human beings experience in the process of cultural change. It is the sum total of these subjective experiences that constitute the substance of Bengu's attempt to link cultural identity with politics.

Some European readers may be shocked or annoyed by what appears to them as criticism of their ways by the writers Dr. Bengu has selected. They may speak of racism or, if they are "open-minded", of reverse racism (thus admitting their own racism). Such a reaction reveals both insecurity and ignorance.

Insecurity because the acceptance of cultural relativity comprises the rejection of what Claude Levi-Strauss has termed a *palmarès des peuples*, a ranking order which places Europe at the top.¹³⁾ This would put an end to the comfortable thought of cultural evolutionism, with everyone ending up being like us. Ignorance because one has to have some elementary knowledge of the psychological torment produced by European colonialism in order to understand the significance of cultural self-assertion movements in 20th century Africa. To quote Chinua Achebe once more: "... no thinking African can escape the pain of the wound in our soul. You have all heard of the African Personality; of African democracy, of the African way to socialism, of negritude, and so on. They are all props we have fashioned at different times to help us get on our feet again. Once we are up we shan't need any of them any more."¹⁴⁾ To interpret them as expressions of anti-White racism is to overreact. In fact, the most brilliant African exponent of negritude is taken by some for an anti-Black racist!¹⁵⁾

If we are to take the *problématique* of intercultural relations seriously, we cannot simply remain on our respective positions, holding on unperturbed to our narrow views of the world. Dr. Bengu has made a valid contribution to a better understanding of cultural differences. He has also added strength to the argument that the concept of culture ought to be taken more seriously in the study of international relations. If he fails to be heard, I propose that readers meditate on the African proverb which says that a lot may happen to a piece of stone without making it any wiser.

Roy Preiswerk

12) One of the important works examined by Bengu is Ayi Kwei Armah's *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, London, Heinemann, 1968.

13) Claude Levi-Strauss, *Race and History*, Paris, UNESCO, 1952.

14) Chinua Achebe, *Morning Yet on Creation Day*, p. 44.

15) Marcien Towa, *L. S. Senghor; Négritude ou Servitude?*, Yaoundé, Ed. CLE, 1971.

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A work of literature can also be regarded as a source of historical information, and often clarifies the climate of thought of a particular age better than any other document.

Collingwood, R.G., **The Idea of History**,
Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1946.

Introduction

The purpose of our research is to analyse post-independence African writings with a view to determining what independence has meant to the Africans up to now, how African identity issues influence relations between these so-called independent African states and their former metropolises, and how these relations, in turn, are influencing and will influence the entire international scene.¹

As the nationalist movement in Africa gathered strength, especially after the Second World War, African voices were heard deploring colonialism and imperialism. As these assertions were made mainly in writing, the role of the African-controlled newspapers should be considered as having been very important, especially during the last stage of the liberation struggle, in so far as they were effectively used by the African nationalists. There had been newspapers before, such as J.E. Casely Hayford had worked on in the Gold Coast — newspapers modelled for, and limited in their circulation to a small intelligentsia in a few, mainly coastal towns of West Africa. The 'popular' newspapers provided a point of departure for the launching of the nationalist movements.

Before independence African assertions were predominantly nationalistic. In the spirit of the nationalistic call for political independence, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana proclaimed: "Seek ye first the political freedom, and all other things will be added unto you." An analysis of this dictum reveals that Nkrumah and possibly other nationalist leaders of the time were aware that 'political freedom' was not the only thing they sought. However, it was believed that 'political freedom' would be a door through which 'all other things' would be ushered in, as it were, automatically.

The attainment of independence marked the climax of the political freedom clamour. The Nigerian freedom song composed by the nationalist freedom movement is revealing of this trend:

Freedom, freedom
Everywhere there will be freedom!
Freedom for you and freedom for me
Everywhere there will be freedom.

Quite a lot was expected from political freedom. Commenting on this freedom song, Chinua Achebe, a Nigerian poet and novelist, said:

¹ African writing in English, however, started during the pre-independence nationalist struggle. The struggle or protest African literature was there even as early as 1884. (Mphahlele Ezekiel, *The African Image*, London, Faber and Faber, 1962, pp. 167-168.)

Not much of a song. But we sang it to a swinging, evangelical hymn-tune from Sacred Songs and Solos. And danced it until our feet gained power beating the hard soil. And Europe capitulated, or so we thought. In the words of Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, Nigeria was given her freedom 'on a platter of gold'. We should have known that freedom should be won, not given on a plate. Like the head of John the Baptist, this gift to Nigeria proved most unlucky. The British who had done precious little to create a spirit of common nationality in Nigeria during the fifty years they were in control, made certain on the eve of their departure that power went to that conservative element in the country which had played no part in the struggle for independence. This would ensure Nigeria's obedience even unto freedom.

As a first sign of this, the British High Commissioner took up residence next door to the prime minister, who was, of course, a British knight.

Within six years of independence Nigeria was a cesspool of corruption and misrule. Public servants helped themselves freely to the nation's wealth. Elections were blatantly rigged. The national census was outrageously staged; judges and magistrates were manipulated by the politicians in power. The politicians themselves were manipulated and corrupted by foreign business interests.²

In this commentary Achebe does not only introduce us to the themes we are going to deal with in the study, but he also gives us a picture of how the high hopes that accompanied the attainment of independence were soon shattered to the ground.

After independence, the trend towards African self-assertion has somewhat shifted from a nationalistic movement to a cultural identity movement. There is much disappointment with the results of independence. The failure of independence, as Achebe suggested, is attributed to both external and internal reasons. Even though people sought and found political freedom, 'the other things' have not been added unto them. Poverty, external dependence and internal repression are still the same, if not worse than during the pre-independence period. There is much disillusionment with the results of present development strategies and with the benefits of international cooperation. Many thought-provoking questions are being posed by African writers in their attempt to re-assess their position in the post-independence era in relation to the Western or Eastern countries: What kind of societal model are we striving for? Are we in fact really determining the process of development? Why has our independence turned into more dependence on the Western powers? This is, in fact, a search for a second and more

² Achebe Chinua, 'The Duty and Involvement of the African Writer', Cartey Wilfred and Kilson Martin, *The African Reader: Independent Africa*, Vintage Books, New York, 1970, pp. 166-167.

meaningful independence, but whereas the first was legal and political, with economic dependence remaining, the second is cultural.

It is now necessary for us to take a closer look at the concept of culture. In everyday language, the term 'culture' conveys an idea of artistic and intellectual creation in a given society. In this sense it is possible to speak of some people as being 'cultured' and others 'uncultured'. Anthropologists, however, have long given the term 'culture' a wider meaning to include religion, family, customs, general knowledge and aptitudes, utensils, habitats, dress, etc. There was a time when some scholars held that there were groups with culture and others without culture — and that the cultureless groups, still being closer to nature, were developing their culture. Some anthropologists concentrated on the study of what they called 'primitive' and later 'pre-literate' societies. This shows that they had moved from the artistic and intellectual creation idea of culture to the other extreme of culture having to do with what looked to them 'primitive'. Nowadays even the American anthropologists who were sceptical about the evolution of culture have accepted in theory and method the fact that there is evolution in culture as in biological development. Writing on culture and changing values in Africa, Dr. Walter Goldschmidt, Professor of Anthropology and Sociology at the University of California, Los Angeles, states:

If we are to understand the future of a people, we must appreciate its past. For the way of life of a people in any time and place is built out of past customs adapted to present circumstances and needs. This way of life is what anthropologists call 'culture'. As anthropologists use the term, all peoples have culture, for culture is their customary way of doing things. It includes all aspects of life: the way they make things, the way in which they organize their society, the way they look at the world about them, even attitudes and sentiments and feelings they share.³

The concept of culture will be used in this work as a generic term for the values people uphold at the present time. Today we define culture as a totality of values, institutions and forms of behaviour transmitted within a society, as well as material goods produced by man.

Whilst we are dealing with the concept of culture, may it be said that we believe that the 'political culture' of Africa can be better understood through global study of culture, for political culture is influenced by all the other aspects of culture. Political culture is influenced by the people's philosophy of life. From this assumption it follows that it is not only political culture that is relevant to the study of political science. Interstate relations are influenced directly or indirectly by other aspects of culture. It is in the light of this influence that cultural values and creations are used by different societies as a means of projecting a people's political ideology. On the other hand it is not rare to find

³ Christian Angela, *Facets of Ghanaian Culture*, Accra, Advance Press, 1971, p. 85.

nations using their political institutions as an expression of their entire culture, and this can have a significant impact in international or inter-cultural relations.⁴

The cultural assertiveness of the Africans occurs at two levels. Micro-cultural identities (or tribal) assert themselves within national units and across national boundaries. The Biafra case is a good example of micro-cultural identities spilling over to affect international relations. Secondly, a macro-cultural identity, here meaning African identity, also manifests itself beyond the nation states. For the purpose of this analysis, we shall concentrate on a macro-cultural identity level, since it is at this level that most of the issues pertinent to present-day international relations are raised. African identity, therefore, will be understood to refer to characteristics which are common to a number of African cultures despite local, national and regional differences. We shall speak of the common African cultural values in the same way that we speak of 'African Nationalism' despite different local, national and regional manifestations and experiences. One example of this is that of a statement that was made by the All African Students Union at the July 1972 Conference at the University of Science and Technology at Kumasi in Ghana, following closely on the heels of the ninth O.A.U. summit at Rabat, Morocco:

We urge all Africans to rely on their own concerted efforts and resources to promote the overall development and total liberation of the continent. . . . In the great struggle for African freedom and advancement, we urge all African countries to adopt the philosophy of Africanism which serves the material, intellectual and spiritual interests of Africa and does not in any way serve the interests of either the Eastern or Western powers. . . .

In this regard, we appeal to African countries to undertake a vigorous cultural revolution in which all citizens shall be compelled to have only African names, streets, public places and institutions named after things and people of African origin and also to liberate their education system from the shackles of bankrupt intellectual imperialism of Europe and America and gear it towards the needs and aspirations of the continent.⁵

⁴ Professor Murray Fishel in his paper on 'political culture' in which Nigeria is used as a model, divides political culture into four categories. This division is supposed to lead to a better understanding of political culture. The divisions are: (i) The Inherited culture which includes the pre-colonial and colonial legacies; (ii) The Goal culture—as essentially a concept of political culture which starts now, i.e. after independence owing to the new elite in power redefining their goals; (iii) The Transfer culture which is the operational mechanisms, e.g. the use of force to bring the goal culture to the citizens; (iv) The Citizen culture, which is the present alloy of the citizens towards the goal culture. This method of analysing political culture may be good enough but it still has to be supplemented by a study of non-political aspects of culture.

⁵ 'African Students get Militant', *The New Ghana*, Vol. I, No. 25, 1972, pp. 5-6.

From the above statement and from other African assertions which will be analysed later, it is clear that the call to 'a vigorous cultural revolution' is made not at a micro-cultural level, national or regional levels, but at the all-embracing macro-cultural level. The call is extended to 'all Africans' and 'all African countries', to adopt the 'philosophy of Africanism'. The general tenor of these African cultural assertions is that the whole continent needs 'total liberation'. What the Africans refer to here is not just the political liberation of those areas that are still directly under colonial or semi-colonial rule, but a type of liberation that will 'serve the material, intellectual and spiritual interests of Africa'. This cultural revolution means liberating African education and other institutions. Even African citizens will be compelled, if there is need, so it appears, to have only African names. From Oginga Odinga's book, **Not Yet Uhuru**⁶, which evaluated Kenyan independence in 1967, Ruwa Chiri, editor of **Africa must Unite**, an international journal of current African affairs, made the 'Not Yet Uhuru Map' of the whole continent which is a confirmation of the fact that the search for a second independence manifests itself on a continental scale.⁷

Increasingly underlying these immediate concerns that have been cited above, some Africans today are becoming aware that solutions must be evolved which will not ignore the values inherent in their own traditional culture. For too long, that culture has been set aside in favour of education in alien history, customs and systems of government. Because of certain unfortunate features of traditional culture there has been too strong a tendency to discard the whole past without attempting to find its many values and glories. There is now a realization that tomorrow must include yesterday if it is to be successful. No nation can soundly build its future while forgetting its past. The Africans are now attempting to reconcile and harmonize the old and the new. Indeed this is perhaps the greatest challenge facing modern Africa today.

This issue of Africans redefining themselves and their values and modes of behaviour is, as it covers many states on the continent, already an international one. However, attention will be given in our analysis to how these identity problems affect the interaction of African and European states. There are two particular areas in the study of international relations where these concerns now become of primary importance: the definition of development goals and the models of inter-state coopera-

⁶ Uhuru is a Swahili word meaning freedom.

⁷ Ruwa Chiri's 'Not Yet Uhuru Map' of Africa was presented to Colonel Acheampong, a ruler of the independent state of Ghana, by Kwame Adu, president of the Ghanaian Students Union in the Americas. No bones were made about the idea having originated from Oginga Odinga's book. The idea behind it is that the whole of Africa has not been liberated. A study of the map shows the Africanization of all names that have to do with Africa, Zimbabwe for Rhodesia, Azania for South Africa, Monomatapa for Mozambique, Ocean of Monomatapa for Indian ocean, ocean of Ethiopia for the Atlantic, the Thaba Bosigo sea, and the bight of Tshaka. What appears to be a drive for a cultural revival is bound to affect inter-state relations.

tion for development. It is no longer accepted that foreign models should prevail when defining the type of institutions, values and modes of behaviour of future African societies. The basic aim of these African cultural assertions is a redefinition of their values at a given point in time so as to determine the relations that should exist between African and European states.

It is appropriate for us to say something about the concept of psycho-social identity at this point, than from, so to speak, a cold start. In response to the cultural dynamics of change, each individual in a given culture, and each group in the case of contact with other cultures, at least partially, adapts to new cultural models through the process of internalization. The process of adjusting to cultural change usually involves a spontaneous or conscious choice between the positive and negative values. In this process, when an individual becomes aware that a considerable cultural distance exists between various internalized elements of culture, the possibility of an identity crisis arises. In this case he no longer knows to which cultural area he wants to belong. An identity crisis has hit many of the post-independence elite in the new African states. This explains to some extent the schizophrenic behaviour of the elite not knowing whether they are Africans or White men. The name 'black-white man' or 'new black oyinbos' (oyinbos means white men) is used in our source material to refer to those Africans that have remained caught up in an identity crisis. The cultural identity movements such as 'Negritude' in French-speaking Africa, and the attempts by the English-speaking Africans to find new development models and a new humanism, spring from identity crises.

Even though Westernized elites in the new African states have adopted European development models, it is not foreseeable how entire populations will force themselves to collectively negate cultural identity in the name of a new 'rationality', welfare and 'progress'. If culture could be determined ideologically and imposed through social manipulation, one could concur with such a development. But above all culture is the behaviour of society in a given ecological context (which science and technology can transform only to a limited degree) and the specific historical experience of that society, which is always deeply instilled. Finally one should remember that the Western development model is itself beginning to stagger (environment problems, inflation, psychological problems of individualization, depletion of raw materials and energy resources, etc.) and faces problems of immense dimensions. While most developing countries are desperately trying to become industrial nations, futurology cannot predict conditions in the West even 20 or 30 years hence.⁸

⁸ Preiswerk A. Roy, 'The Place of Intercultural Relations in the Study of International Relations', a paper presented at the Convention of: The International Studies Association at St. Louis, Missouri, 22 March 1974, pp. 22-23.

In the light of these problems that the so-called developed countries are having, of which the Africans are well informed, and the fact that African states are disillusioned with their independence 'without content', the cultural identity movement in Africa becomes even more meaningful.

Since this new cultural identity movement has not yet become official government policy in most African states, an analysis of the classical source materials such as government documents, treaties, notes and other official papers would not be appropriate for this kind of study. These documents would be enlightening if our purpose were to study the official foreign policy of African states since independence. As this study aims at seeing how critical Africans are of the policies they have been pursuing since the attainment of independence and what innovations and new development models are envisaged for the future, our source material will be non-official documents which reveal the developments which are taking place in the minds of an increasing number of Africans over the last decade. The sources that are going to be analysed in this work are literary works, academic works, political pamphlets and other publications which reflect unofficial points of view.⁹ In order to limit our field of study to a particular area, we shall only analyse Ghanaian and Nigerian sources for the reason that these two countries have been more articulate in their cultural assertions and that these two states, having been among the first African states to attain independence, have also been the pace-setters in the cultural identity movement. For the classification of our Bibliography, therefore, only works by Ghanaians and Nigerians shall be regarded as source material.

This discussion on the choice of our source material leads us to a question of methodology. Klineberg and Zavalloni used a quantitative analysis method to scrutinize data based on interviews in their study of attitudes and identity. Their study was a cross-national and cross-cultural one, but it was restricted to Africans and to students. Even though they had used an intrusive research method, on realizing the limitations of the method and of their study, in their conclusion they pleaded that their results should be considered in relative, and not in absolute terms. They further pleaded that some of their findings are ambivalent and confusing.

We have already mentioned the ambivalence in the attitudes expressed by African students towards Europeans. It is true that the stereotypes held about whites are not very favourable, but the degree of liking expressed for several Western countries as well as the extent of acceptance of intermarriage between Africans and Europeans, indicates that African racism is considerably less virulent than the white variety. Since colonialism on the one hand, and *Négritude* on the other, have often been interpreted as having

⁹ See Annex — Bibliography — Section I — Sources.

contributed to 'racism in reverse', it is comforting to discover that the prevailing attitudes are relatively friendly. Since we found an apparent paradox between negative stereotypes and positive acceptance, we believe that this result should be further explored.¹⁰

It is this recommendation by these two political scientists that has led us to decide to use the 'qualitative content analysis' method in analysing our source material. We believe that our findings may throw light, if not clear up, the apparent paradox between negative stereotypes and positive acceptance that baffled Klineberg and Zavalloni. This type of analysis will focus more on the intentions of the authors. In analysing the attitude underlying the description of the indicators of cultural identity in the texts, we shall be less concerned with the content as such than with content as a 'reflection' of 'deeper' phenomena. In order to supplement the 'content analysis' method a number of Africans whose writings will be analysed, and other African scholars interested in the subject have been interviewed. This was done in order to verify some of our findings in an intrusive way and also to clear up some of the paradoxes.

It would be over-ambitious of this study to attempt measuring the extent to which post-independence Africans have been hit by the identity crisis or to measure up the extent to which future international relations will be determined by the African assertions. We shall pay attention, however, to the possible future implications of the assertions. At best the study will give an account of both positive and negative 'images' Africans have of themselves and of others.

Kenneth Boulding, for example, has written that, 'the national image, however, is the last great stronghold of sophistication. . . . Nations are divided into "good" and "bad" . . . the enemy is all bad, one's own nation is of spotless virtue.'

The relationship of national images to international conflict is clear: decision-makers act upon their definition of the situation and their images of states. . . . others as well as their own. These images are in turn dependent upon the decision-makers' belief system, and these may or may not be accurate representations of 'reality'. Thus it has been suggested that 'international conflict frequently is not between states, but rather between distorted images of states'. The belief system, composed of a number of images of the past, present and future, includes 'all the accumulated, organized knowledge that the organism has about itself and the world'. It may be thought of as the set of lenses through which information concerning the physical and the social environment is received. It orients the individual to his

¹⁰ Klineberg Otto And Zavalloni Marisa, *Nationalism and Tribalism among African Students*, Mouton, Paris, 1969, p. 241. We recommend the reading of this work as a necessary and useful starting point for anyone interested in the study of African attitudes and identity.

environment, defining it for him and identifying for him its salient characteristics.¹¹

The importance of images, especially national ones, lies in the fact that national and international entities act according to the knowledge they have and that knowledge is usually a simplified representation of reality. Images may, therefore, be more important than realities in this sense. It has been ascertained already that since no nation is an island unto itself, the prevailing images of other groups (national or cultural) may play an important role in determining the relations of that nation with the international community in general. There was a time when even knowledge of stereotypes held by different groups of other groups was regarded as useless. Nowadays stereotypes are regarded as an inevitable 'short-hand' characterization of whole groups — national, cultural, religious and racial. Thus earlier emphasis on stereotypes as representing distorted images has tended to shift in more recent writings to an emphasis on stereotypes as representing types of simplified cognitions that are widely if not universally applied. As a result of this shift in emphasis our problem now is to determine how the images of a given group arise than to establish the errors and distortions involved in such cognitions.¹² An analysis of these images and stereotypes soon reveals the motivations and the reason why groups, governments and institutions act as they do. Studies of the images that come out in African unofficial writing are important as they reflect the drives, fears and goals of the people.

The aim of this study, therefore, is to detect political meaning of the 'images' in African cultural affirmations and to show how these 'images' will influence the relations of the Africans with the Western and the Eastern world. In our view, man, either as an individual or in a group, has a right to assert his cultural identity. The fact that he has presented himself at all, rather than withdraw shyly, is a manifestation of this self-assertion. His past experience, his will-power, his self-confidence, his potentialities, his hopes and aspirations are all involved in his attempt to register his presence.¹³ If this study achieves anything at all, the least it should do is to show that the African is keen to register his presence with his culture in the international scene.

¹¹ Holsti Ole R., 'The Belief System and National Images: A Case Study', Rosenau James N., *International Politics and Foreign Policy* (Revised), p. 544.

¹² Klineberg O & Zavalloni M., *Nationalism and Tribalism among African Students*, p. 166.

¹³ Awosika V.O., *An African Meditation*, African Literary and Scientific Publications, Lagos, 1967, p. 102.

PART I

In this first part an attempt is made to analyse current manifestations of African self-assertions which affect international relations. African actors (politicians, diplomats and journalists) and other scholars give their views on Africa's interaction with the big powers, foreign aid and some of the images Africans hold of the United Nations and international co-operation in general.

CHAPTER I

THE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND THE MODELS OF INTER-STATE CO-OPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

A. THE BIG POWERS INTERACT WITH INDEPENDENT AFRICA

Two ideas were basic to the independence movement, both having significance for the whole of Africa. The first was that of self-assertion. Independence was the triumph of the idea that Africans ought to, and could, rule themselves. The second was that independence was to enable Africans to construct the sort of economic, political and social systems that would enable them to correct what was universally regarded as 'backwardness' and create conditions in which all and sundry could find self-fulfilment. The economy would be so managed that poverty and squalor would be considerably reduced, if not entirely abolished; education would become the right of all; the African intellect, dulled under the impact of colonial mythology, would burst out and flower.¹ The independence movement, however, failed to make more than a verbal denunciation of the assumed superiority of British civilization. While it sought to remove British control it accepted that the society under its own control should of its own free will choose to continue to conduct its affairs within the context of British traditions, customs, culture and mores.

The material which is going to be analysed later in the other chapters shows that the adoption of British standards, customs and

¹ *The Legon Observer*, Editorial, Vol. VI, No. 6, 12th March 1971, p. 1.

institutions by the independent African states was not just a pragmatic strategy which was necessary if the British were to be persuaded to relinquish their control quickly and peacefully. It was a reflection of a basic identification of some segments of the society with white Western culture. If Dr. Busia, leader of the second Ghanaian Republic, could openly declare that he was a Westerner,² then some Africans' identification with the aggressor was nothing to be ashamed of. Errol Miller's analysis of attitudes and modes of behaviour in the post-independence Jamaican society concludes as follows:

... it reflected the underlying identification with the aggressor that had developed in the society consequent upon its history. This identification has been labelled 'Afro-Saxon'. The fact is that it was indeed part of the implicit assumption of the Nationalist Movement. The point to note is that the Nationalist Movement conceived of the destiny of the Jamaican people within the framework of the well known and still recognized respectable family of the British Commonwealth.³

Our analysis reveals that African society is in a number of ways different from that of Jamaica. One basic difference is that African society still has large segments of people who know and practise their traditional culture whereas this cannot be the case in Jamaican society. However, the overall development goals of both societies appear to have been the same at independence. Both societies accepted that they were underdeveloped. The aim of these societies was to become developed in a manner similar to the technologically advanced European societies:

The operational strategy appropriate for this goal is that development should be initiated in the first place by (a) the influx of capital from the developed countries, whether through governmental aid or private investment; (b) the presence of personnel from the developed societies equipped with expertise to be used in the service of developments, and (c) the adoption of techniques, procedures, and practices that have been successfully employed in developed societies.⁴

At independence, therefore, underdeveloped societies had to create a sort of climate that would attract foreign capital, welcome experts, consultants, and persons possessing scarce skills, and a willingness and readiness to receive these new techniques, procedures and practices. As Miller points out, implicit in the developed/underdeveloped classification is a superior/inferior description of the two types of society. Pertinent questions arise: Why did African leaders accept the developed/underdeveloped classi-

² Tetteh A. Kofi, 'The Elite and the Masses', *The Legon Observer*, Vol. VIII, 21st April 1972, p. 17.

³ Miller Errol, 'Self and Identity Problems in Jamaica, Part III, An Analysis of Attempted Solutions', *Caribbean Quarterly*, Vol. 19, No. 2, June 1973, p. 117.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

fication as the basis for their continued relationship with the former 'imperialist masters' and their allies? How could these leaders so readily imply their own inability to change the nature of their society by internal effort 'when this assumption appeared to be the most fundamental tenet of the Nationalist Movement'?⁵ How could the Independence Movement seek to throw off British control and then so readily accept the concepts of British/Western society as the ambition of its destiny?

The terms for interaction between the British and other European nations and independent Africa, and the operational strategy of the development philosophy, were basically that development would be initiated by imitating the developed societies and by depending on their capital, personnel and techniques. How could the Nationalist Movement emphasizing independence, self-reliance and self-sufficient qualities of the society so readily give way to a philosophy which conceived of new dependence on Britain and societies like Britain? Miller asserts that it is difficult to reconcile on one hand the society actively seeking the departure of British administrators and technocrats and on the other extending a welcoming hand to white financiers and technicians.⁶ Why did the society seek to reject British political and economic control but so swiftly accept a relationship which could conceivably bring even greater economic control from outside the society? It is obvious that the nationalist leaders did not put into practice the theories of independence and self-reliance which they preached. Akwabi-Ameyaw, writing about 'Foreign Experts and Self-Reliance', points out that the Ghanaian public was shocked by the announcement that a team of three experts from West Germany had arrived to remap bus routes in the Accra cosmopolitan areas, including the suburbs:

One wonders whether after over sixteen years of political independence Ghana is still so destitute of human talent as to invite foreign experts to come and tell us that we need more buses on Accra... routes and how to plan service on them.

One wonders whether the government is not in duty bound to request, say Legon's Geography Department and Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research, the Road Research Institute, and the Survey of Town Planning Departments to jointly undertake such a simple traffic census or mapping. We are very much convinced and we shall always insist that it is only by using local talent and institutions to solve our peculiar local problems that we could boast of self-reliance in practice.⁷

One way of explaining the acceptance of dependence on the European states by Africans is that the success of the Nationalist Movement in

⁵ Ibid., p. 121.

⁶ Ibid., p. 122.

⁷ Akwabi-Ameyaw, 'Foreign Experts and Self-Reliance', *The Legon Observer*, Vol. VIII, No. 13, 29th June 1973, p. 308.

British colonies in obtaining political independence forced the former colonial masters and their allies to redefine their role with respect to the new nations. Without implying complicity, this redefinition of role quite likely was done, Miller asserts, with the best possible intentions. The result of this redefinition, however, was the developed and underdeveloped classification and the role of the 'developed' became that of assisting the 'underdeveloped' to develop by imitating its practices and procedures, using capital given or loaned but always under the supervision of its citizens considered to be possessed of particular skills. The powerful societies offered to interact with the newly independent states according to this pattern.⁸ It is, therefore, against this background that we can partly understand the intentions of African statesmen who invite foreign experts into Africa sixteen years after independence. Maybe this is done to invite foreign capital since these are the terms for the assistance of the 'underdeveloped' by the 'developed' societies. This is the development philosophy that was presented by the powerful Western nations to the newly independent societies, on the basis of which there could be interaction between the two societies.⁹ It is, however, difficult to understand how the African nationalists accepted this development strategy and philosophy for it was incompatible with the sentiments of the Nationalist Movement.

There are African writers who place the blame squarely on the shoulders of the African politicians for the economic dependence of the African societies on the Western ones:

Economically Ghana has not undergone any radical changes since the early 1960s. In 1957 when we became independent, there was the expectation and belief that Ghana was bound to be a great and prosperous nation in Africa. We took it for granted that we were great and would continue to be great. What we did not realize, and for which I would largely blame the C.P.P.¹⁰ leaders, was that national greatness could only be achieved and sustained through the dedication and hard work of the people. We seemed to have been content with sending the colonial power away, but sending a foreign power away from one's own country is one thing and building a strong and developed society another thing.¹¹

This Ghanaian writer is capable of extensive self-analysis and criticism. He attributes the economic weakness of Ghanaian society to the politicians' neglect of development plans in pursuit of political glory.

⁸ Miller Errol, 'Self and Identity Problems in Jamaica', *Caribbean Quarterly*, Vol. 19, No. 2, June 1973, p. 122.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 122.

¹⁰ C.P.P. refers to the Convention People's Party in Ghana.

¹¹ Agyare Koillarbi, 'Ghana and the Future', *The Legon Observer*, Vol. IX, No. 1, 11-24 January 1974, p. 2.

The dictum of those days was 'Seek ye first the political kingdom and all things shall be added unto it.' Thus instead of economics becoming the basis of power, politics became Ghana's greatest glory. While our leaders were occupied with grandiose political plans and dreams, development plans were left to die in the files.¹²

What Agyare hardly realizes is that it was not so much the neglect of the economic plans that weakened the economy of Ghana but the flaw in the development pattern which allowed the Western countries to control Ghana's economy. Bentsi-Enchill criticizes the African nationalist leaders not only for their neglect of the society's economic development but for their failure to work out a framework that could enable Africa to control her destiny:

What kind of people are we to shape ourselves to become?

What steps do we have to take to control our destiny and retain our self-respect? These questions remain with us today because our leadership at independence proved wholly unequal to the challenge. The heart-searching question of national identity was sidetracked with slogans about the African personality.¹³

There is evidence that some African leaders, like Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, tried to establish a national identity and a frame of reference which would enable Africans to conceptualize themselves and their society as self-supporting, self-reliant and independent, and as capable of determining their own destiny after their own fashion. Speaking of African states in general, however, and this includes Ghana, it appears that owing to problems of self-worth evaluation, the old frame of reference that they sought to change remained active enough to allow the society to accept an inferior status, a dependent existence, and a destiny defined in terms of the 'former aggressor'¹⁴. There is also evidence that the two frames of reference in behaviour, attitudes and the conduct of national affairs co-existed in many independent African states. Whilst they accepted their political independence they continued to live under self-colonizing conditions. The extreme case of self-colonization and proof of the continuing co-existence of the new and the old frames of reference in independent Africa is that displayed by some francophone Heads of States who still want to subject themselves to French control. The November 1973 Paris meeting between President Pompidou and African Heads of States, boycotted by Guinea, Cameroon, Chad, Mauritania and Madagascar, reflected that some French-speaking African states still want to uphold President Senghor's dreams of 'l'Eurafrrique'. At the end of the Paris meeting it was announced that 'a flexible institution' would be

¹² Ibid., p. 3.

¹³ Bentsi-Enchill, Kwamena, *Institutional Challenges of our Time*, Accra, Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1971, p. 10.

¹⁴ Miller Errol, 'Self and Identity Problems in Jamaica', *Caribbean Quarterly*, Vol. 19, No. 2, June 1973, p. 123.

established between France and so-called independent francophone Africa. When President Diori was asked whether the organization could be called a Francophone Commonwealth, he said: 'I do not know an equivalent word for the Commonwealth in the French language. Could you help me to find one?'¹⁵ What is striking here is that while the Anglophone African states are trying to cut off the British and European apron strings some Francophone states look to the Commonwealth as a model to follow.

There is a growing number of Africans who now fully recognize the logical contradictions of Africa's development strategies. In the rest of this chapter we shall analyse African attempts to destroy the old dependencies on Europe and Western societies which undermine the spirit of independence and self-reliance.

B. THE FOREIGN AID PHILOSOPHY AND FOREIGN EXPERTS

The philosophy underlying aid was that of promoting economic viability in the developing colonies of the post-war world; but after the end of the first 'Development Decade' and the beginning of another, all parties to original goals and ideals can confess to nothing short of failure and frustration. To the tormented populations of the developing world, at least, two twin realities now become obvious: the first is that the technologically and economically advanced nations, particularly of the West, are neither really serious nor really sincere about effective aid to them; and the second is that the final reality is one that calls for their own effort for self-emancipation.¹⁶ Jones-Quartey does not offer a pragmatic method for African self-emancipation. He merely verbalizes the Africans' feelings of discontent with the aid programmes and then analyses the reasons for such discontent.

The original plea in favour of the countries to be aided was that the donors should contribute 1% of their gross national product (GNP) per annum to the poor countries. Not one of the donors has come anywhere near the fulfilment of this requirement and promise. This writer's argument is that the rich countries have all failed to aid the poor.¹⁷ Aid in this respect is a mere farce since it is so marginal that it does not cover the needs. Amidst this general failure the notable example is that of the United States, which has been reducing her aid programme. Even though amounts involved in United States-Third World aid programmes stagger around 1-3 thousand million dollars, the complaint about its ineffectiveness is valid in spite of America's efforts. Her contribution is still far less than 1% of her GNP.

The failure of the aid programme to achieve the quantitative ambition set for it is not, however, its only disturbing feature and the one that makes Africa a political and economic factor in international relations:

¹⁵ *West Africa*, 15th April 1974, No. 2965, p. 427.

¹⁶ Jones-Quartey K.A.B., 'The Philosophy of Aid', a mimeographed paper, Institute of Adult Education, University of Ghana, p. 1.

What makes aid not just a failure in a negative sense but a danger in a positive one is the complex of devastating derivatives it has generated and added to the already full schedule of black Africa's political and economic troubles. It is to these new factors of danger that African leaders should now be addressing themselves with increasing attention and concentration. For the threat they pose to our political and economic future is very real, as well as being very great. African leaders just must accept this exposure of danger ranged against their countries as one of their most pressing contemporary responsibilities.¹⁸

The motive behind the aid scheme has also been strongly criticized. It would have seemed eminently rational, it is argued, to have had a realistic aid programme for the rehabilitation of the poorer countries, 'not as an act of altruism or a means of heavenly grace but as a hard-headed insurance policy against material and moral disaster.'¹⁹ As the rich countries cannot throw the underdeveloped countries into the Atlantic

Donor Country	Population (Thousands)	Total Aid Contribution (\$ millions) 1970	Total Aid as % of GNP 1970
United States	205,400	3,050	0.31
France	50,700	950	0.65
West Germany	59,200	599	0.32
Japan	103,500	458	0.37
United Kingdom	55,700	447	0.23
Canada	21,400	346	0.43
Netherlands	13,000	196	0.63
Australia	12,600	202	0.59
Italy	53,600	152	0.16
Belgium	9,700	120	0.48
Sweden	8,100	117	0.37
Denmark	4,900	59	0.38
Norway	3,900	37	0.48
Portugal	9,700	31	0.33
Switzerland	6,300	30	0.15
Austria	7,400	19	0.13
Total	625,100	6,813	0.34

¹⁷ The following table is a summary of findings published by the *Times* of London, from research into facts provided in the records of the International Monetary Fund's International Financial Statistics for 1970, and from the OECD press release in June 1971. The marginal nature of foreign aid to poor countries is traced in this table.

¹⁸ Jones-Quartey, K.A.B., 'The Philosophy of Aid', a mimeographed paper, Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, p. 2.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

or any other ocean, and since the poverty of the Third World will obviously remain a problem and an embarrassment to the advanced nations, a pawn in the power game between east and west, and, therefore, a constant threat to peace in our time, the alternative would have been to ensure that aid eliminates poverty. Some Africans have come to believe that such aims were not in all places and at all times correctly articulated and that no effective results will ever be achieved with the aid programme.²⁰ This is reckoned to be the failure of the ideals of aid.

Reports abound that African countries are usually anxious to receive foreign aid, 'regardless of whether it comes through regional or multi-lateral channels, or through normal bilateral approaches'. A Ghanaian economist, Assibi Abudu, asserts that it is irrational for African governments to be that indifferent, for:

... the value of any capital inflow is greatly influenced by the method through which it is administered. Each has its own set of peculiar constraints. Other things remaining the same, African countries should have preference for the source or method with the least number of constraints.²¹

This means that if African governments do not shop among aid offers for the best terms, they come off with some pretty bad purchases. It also follows from further economic logic, says Jones-Quartey, that there is therefore no great effort made by the sellers to market only the best goods at the most competitive prices: 'the market is — if you please — just a dumping ground for anything, even junk.'²²

An interesting phenomenon in the aid programme is that the donor countries have almost all discovered that they can combine the ideal of aid to poor countries with the incentive of economic promotion for themselves, the already rich ones. Nkrumah wrote to say:

'Aid', therefore, to a neo-colonial State is merely a revolving credit, paid by the neo-colonial master, passing the neo-colonial State and returning to the neo-colonial master in the form of increased profits.²³

There are conditions which hedge aid around; like the conclusion of commerce and navigation treaties; agreements for economic co-operation; the right to meddle in internal finances, including currency and foreign exchange, to lower trade barriers in favour of the donor country's goods and capital; to protect the interests of private investments; determination of how the funds are to be used; forcing the recipient to set counterpart funds; to supply raw materials to the donor; and use of such funds to buy goods from the donor nation. These conditions apply to industry, com-

²⁰ Ibid., p. 3.

²¹ Ibid., p. 4.

²² Ibid., p. 4.

²³ Nkrumah Kwame, *Revolutionary Path*, London, Panaf Books, 1973, p. 319.

merce, agriculture, shipping and insurance, apart from others which are military and political.²⁴

Jones-Quartey sums up the Africans' objection to the many strings attached to aid as follows:

Just look at the facts. These loans, credits, advances, and what else, are for the 'givers', securely tied, in the majority of cases, to purchases of goods and manufactures in the markets of aiders by the aided, to the total amount of the loan or grant, or very nearly so; secondly, the objects of the donations, loans, grants, etc. have to be approved by the donors, . . . the donors **have to be pleased** with the plans of the donee-country; thirdly, derived costs to the latter are not only enormous, they are oppressive: housing provided for the technical aid personnel and foreign 'experts', on superscale levels; sometimes support services added, upon demand: servants, transportation, security, municipal taxes, etc.; fourthly, freedom from other taxation as well for the aiders, and so on and so forth.²⁵

The disappointment and anger of some Africans at how the so-called aid programmes are used as instruments for the exploitation of the poor countries can hardly be concealed.

Nkrumah's analysis reveals that only ten per cent of United States 'aid' to Africa is spent on industrialization, and most of this is only in those areas which are regarded as safe for capitalism. In contrast, 70 per cent of aid from socialist countries is spent on industrialization and the organization of profitable production. Interest rates on loans from capitalist countries vary from between 6½ to 8 per cent, whereas socialist creditors charge only 2½ per cent. Aid from socialist countries is used mainly for state projects. This again is in striking contrast to 'aid' from the West, which is almost entirely in the private sector.²⁶ This, however, is no longer regarded as aid.

Lartey of Ghana sees the whole aid scheme as being a problem of the 'love-hate psychosis' on the part of Africans:

We invite foreign investments and turn round to accuse the responders of exploitation, or of giving us aid with strings. But who parts with his money without expecting some yielding returns? It is pretentiously forgotten that those countries who profess to give aid without strings are for their part aiming at ideological indoctrination . . . The above examples (there are many more) show the situation in contemporary Ghanaian political thinking. The examples given have a basic hate-love flavour. But once the hate (or prejudice) has been established, it is extended to far-reaching ramifications.²⁷

²⁴ Ibid., p. 327.

²⁵ Jones-Quartey, K.A.B., 'The Philosophy of Aid', p. 4.

²⁶ Nkrumah Kwame, *Revolutionary Path*, p. 504.

²⁷ Lartey John, 'Love-Hate Psychosis and the Rest', *The Legon Observer*, Vol. VIII, No. 11, 1st June 1973, p. 262.

The point Lartey brings out is that aid programmes are not imposed on the African states. Could it be desperation that drives the African leaders to accept aid with strings that are tantamount to exploitation or ideological indoctrination? This writer also tells much about international business disguised as aid which yields good returns to the rich countries. Nkrumah, for instance, wrote in 1965 that France spends about two thousand million francs on 'aid' to the francophone countries in Africa. These two thousand millions are the means by which France maintains very close cultural, political and economic ties with them, for they are large markets for French exports. In fact, aid is considered by French governments to be 'good investment'.²⁸

There are cases in which aid is only symbolic. A considerable proportion of money disbursed as bilateral aid from the West either does not leave the donor country at all, the aid being provided in the form of goods, or returns in a relatively short period as payment for additional exports, or in other ways. Of every £100 of bilateral aid disbursed by the United Kingdom in the period 1946-66, £72.5 was aid tied to the supply of British goods, or resulted in direct spending on British goods and services.²⁹ Even multilateral aid appears to serve mainly to improve the economic position of the donor countries. It has been estimated that the United Kingdom has secured export orders of over £116 for every £100 of its multilateral aid, due largely to the operation of the International Development Agency (IDA):

For example a recent Whitehall study on the subject has calculated that for every £100 contributed to IDA by the UK in 1964-66, IDA spent about £150 on UK goods.³⁰

From this it follows that many projects accomplished through foreign aid are designed to help the donor's balance of payments rather than the recipient's economic development. What appears to be the main objection to aid is that the recipient is burdened not only with a costly loan to repay, but also sometimes with uneconomic projects, and with political and economic strings which hamper independent development and positively retard economic growth.³¹ The aid programme works according to a framework which undermines the independence of the poor countries.

One of the six types of foreign aid to Africa which both Professor Morgenthau and Dr. O'Brien classify as being neo-colonialistic, is 'the military aid to former colonies' type which can be a means of preserving the power realities of the old colonial situation. This type of foreign aid is completely antithetical to the tone and tenor of Pan-Africanist ide-

²⁸ Nkrumah Kwame, *Revolutionary Path*, p. 504.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 504.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 504.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 505.

logy.³² Military aid just like the 'subsistence' aid which preserves the existence of small client and dependent units, encourages the Balkanization of Africa, which is recognized as one of the forms taken by neo-colonialism. Africa is parcelled into various groups of states attached to and influenced, or even controlled overtly or covertly by, the world powers. This works against the whole ideology and strategy of contemporary Pan-Africanism.³³ Many of the most forceful leaders of the movement see in the threat of the partition of Africa one of the greatest dangers. The Organization for African Unity has greatly been disturbed by the economic division of Africa in its efforts to unite the continent.

Clark's discovery whilst in the United States was that aid is expressly used as a political tool by the developed countries. On learning that Clark was a Nigerian, the Americans swamped around him and boasted:

We have all the funds, equipment and experts to supply any country soliciting our help, yes, even communist countries, but we demand not simply a native hand willing to plan and work as we direct but also a heart that will forever say thank-you to the American people... Even now moneys and men are ready any minute for release to Nigeria; but your governments still have not asked for them.³⁴

From the above passage it is evident that aid has become an effective instrument of the economic and ideological exploitation of the weak by the strong. Aluko tells of strong states that work their way, like worms, into the confidence of the political leaders of Africa. They form corrupt associations with them in which 'they suck the economic blood of these nations to the point of incurable economic anaemia.'³⁵ Aluko uses a very striking image of parasitism that the aid scheme has turned into. He warns African states about the incurability of 'economic anaemia'. Paradoxically, it is the strong that live as parasites.

The economic weakness of developing countries can be explained, to some extent, in terms of their built-in inefficiency which leads to huge costs of living. Part of the poverty of African states can only be understood in the light of the attitude of some foreign firms of 'get rich fast and leave'. There is a large element of exploitation by foreign companies. In the world as it is now, developed countries and their nationals have carefully carved out exclusive areas of monopoly for themselves.³⁶

³² Jones-Quartey, K.A.B., 'Pan-Africanism' — A mimeographed paper, Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, p. 1.

³³ Ibid., p. 2.

³⁴ Clark J.P., *America, Their America*, London, Heinemann, 1964, pp. 140-141.

³⁵ Aluko T.M., *Chief the Honourable Minister*, London, Heinemann, 1970, p. 117.

³⁶ 'Exploitation by Foreign Commercial Agents', *The Legon Observer*, Vol. IV, 21st November 1969, p. 22.

In Ghana, certain vital items of consumption are at the moment obtainable only through so-called sole agents. Quite apart from the fact that it is very easy to establish monopolies in small economies like ours, these puny sole agents or monopolies reserve the right to sell to the already impoverished consumer at exorbitant prices.³⁷

Before its fall, the Busia government in Ghana was warned by the **Legon Observer** to take a serious look at virtually all the contracts — ‘and those loans, and experts in our midst!’ — and to make bold decisions with regard to them:

And when the dubious foreign investors and their internal economic saboteurs — however highly placed — are removed from our midst, posterity shall say that the Busia administration took cognizance of the need for economic independence, without which political independence becomes a mere misnomer.³⁸

From many assertions such as this we deduce that the situation which may yet result in an open rebellion against the aid system, is the highly explosive fact that local academics, technicians, bankmen, agriculturists, economists, engineers, and others are beginning to conclude from their own cognition that foreign ‘experts’ are in the majority of cases not a wit better in knowledge, training, experience or understanding than themselves. This is a growing and highly interesting development that has entered into the picture. A Ghanaian scholar postulates that when this image of the foreign ‘experts’ assumes the right size and volatility it will result in a nasty situation in many ‘aided’ countries. A check of the Ghana press of the last three years or so gives ample evidence of this slowly growing trend in local reactions to aid and to foreign experts. A bad outcome, asserts Jones-Quartey, can be avoided only if before then the whole system changes for the much better, and black Africa begins to experience a more self-satisfying condition than that of being but a political and economic pawn in international relations.³⁹

In his article, ‘Ghana and the Common Market — We Stand to Lose’, Amponsah warns that if these so-called experts, some of whom are either agents of the imperialists or not really experts at all, take advantage of the confidence that the Ghana Government may have in them to mislead it,

We will teach them a terrible lesson before their mis-advice begins to have effect on the society. This time, we are not going to joke again with them.⁴⁰

³⁷ Ibid., p. 22.

³⁸ *The Legon Observer*, Editorial, Vol. V, 13th February 1970, p. 2.

³⁹ Jones-Quartey, K.A.B., ‘The Philosophy of Aid’, p. 5.

⁴⁰ Amponsah Peter G.K., ‘Ghana and the Common Market — We Stand to Lose’. *Daily Graphic*, February 23, 1973, p. 7.

Amponsah maintains that after the coup of 1966 some Ghanaians worked in collaboration with experts imported from abroad, most of whom were political agents, and announced that the factories that were being set up by the Nkrumah Government to manufacture goods with local raw materials were not economically viable. The reason for this was to make Ghana a non-manufacturing country, a supplier of cheap raw materials, and a dumping ground for foreign manufactured goods.⁴¹

With regard to this system of aid and foreign experts, the editor of the **Legon Observer** remarks that it is extremely doubtful that this sort of system, especially when largely operated with foreign capital, can take care of the interests of the overwhelming majority of people. There appears to be altogether too much reliance on foreign expertise:

The economic ministry and the office of government machinery are too full of 'experts' who are necessarily birds of passage and ultimately serve the interests of their own countries: numerous experts have come and gone and yet we remain in the woods. We should increasingly use our own men for a change.⁴²

It has been made abundantly clear that the only people who gain in Africa through the system of foreign aid are a few elite and not the overwhelming majority of people. The system is, however, a problem even to the modernizing elite. When it is remembered that no foreign aid is directed as an instrument of charitable intent, but as an effective means of projecting the donor's national interest, it becomes more difficult for the Africans who receive these aids to pursue independent policies. As the new states generally accept aid from the two giant world powers it is becoming increasingly difficult for them to meet the ideological requirements which the acceptance of aid entail, and yet maintain their own particular brand of democracy. In this way, the manipulation of the international situation by the great and industrialized powers, through aid offers does in fact affect the internal stability in the new states. For instance, as many of the new states are mostly one crop or one product economies⁴³ the market can deliberately manipulate the prices of these commodities in such a way that will have serious consequences in the internal affairs of these countries.

The continued low prices of cocoa on the international market was one of the chief causes for the economic depression in Ghana and consequent overthrow of the Nkrumah regime.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 7.

⁴² *The Legon Observer*, Editorial, Vol. VI, No. 6, 12th March 1971, p. 2.

⁴³ Ghana depends on cocoa mainly for her foreign exchange earnings, Zambia on copper, Kenya on coffee, Senegal on groundnuts.

⁴⁴ Emezi C.E. and Nwosu H.N., 'Problems of Democracy in New African States', Institute of African Studies, *Research Review*, University of Ghana, Vol. 7, No. 3, 1971, p. 60.

Awosika holds that it is ridiculous for private organizations in African countries to go to Europe or America to appeal for funds at public meetings for the purpose of building roads, hospitals and other social amenities for their towns or tribes as such efforts are liable to all sorts of complications. Africa as a focus of all humanitarian efforts is the exact antithesis of Africa with a will-power and self-respect.⁴⁵

Unless African countries make very determined efforts not to advertise their poverty, ludicrous international beggary will further expose the African personality to universal contempt. The African probably has no greater access or right to European or North American charity than the peoples of Spain, Portugal, Greece, Southern Italy and South America.⁴⁶

Awosika's interest is not in the failure of the foreign aid schemes, but he appeals to the Africans' sense of self-respect to get them out of the dependence frame of reference which still persists in the post-colonial era.

Akyea's **Report on the Second World Food Congress** reflects that some Africans are opposed to development plans being imposed from the developed countries. Some African participants at the Congress made it clear that the economic difficulties of the developing countries were not a problem of quantitative growth, as it is usually believed, but essentially those of lack of proper planning. The attitude of some donor countries and agencies insisting on birth control as part of their terms for giving aid was deplored. Those governments which proclaimed that reduction in numbers would solve their problems were asked to think again about the consequences of such policies. What stands out in this report is not only the rejection of foreign values and development models attached to foreign aid but the militancy of the youth who seek to relate their development strategies to their cultural values:

The youth were happy that their voice was being listened to although they were sceptical about the reception. Their concern was with the whole world, not with the technicalities of food production and sociological surveys of the slums... They rejected the terms developed and developing countries and instead substituted exploiting and exploited countries.⁴⁷

The rejection of the terms 'developed' and 'developing' (even though 'developing' has an element of hope for the poor countries and is, therefore, preferred to 'underdeveloped') signifies the rejection of the whole post-colonial development framework. To some Africans, the post-colonial relation between the developed and the developing countries is that of the exploitation of the poor and weak countries by the rich and strong ones.

⁴⁵ Awosika, V.O., *An African Meditation*, African Literary and Scientific Publications, Lagos 1967, p. 143.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

⁴⁷ Akyea E. Ofori, 'Report on the Second World Food Congress', *The Legon Observer*, Vol. V, No. 18, August, 1970, p. 10.

C. THE FUTURE OF AFRICA'S RELATIONS WITH EUROPE

Some images that Africans hold of their relations with Britain and Europe in general are far from being positive. Britain, for instance, is held responsible for the weakening of relations within the Commonwealth. According to the **Legon Observer's** analysis of British policy towards her former colonies, by the late 1960s and early 1970s it was becoming increasingly clear that the real basis of Britain's power and prestige in the future would be in the new arrangements for British trade. British statesmen had come to the conclusion that their national survival depended on new arrangements which lay outside the Commonwealth and on the continent of Europe. Consequently in the past few years British policies have become more self-centred, displaying alongside a pronounced European orientation and only a mild regard for Commonwealth concerns.⁴⁸

Despite the support that the African leaders got from their counterparts in the 'White Commonwealth', the conference came out with a vague communiqué which does not commit Britain to any change of policy and which is therefore acclaimed by British officials as a considerable victory for Mr. Heath.⁴⁹

Some Africans realize that Britain has left them in the lurch and it is plain that Europe-oriented Britain is becoming unresponsive to the old style of Commonwealth pressure. The editor of the **Legon Observer** continues to say that it is imperative for Africans to change their attitudes towards Britain as the senior partner in the Commonwealth. This, of course, is not to say that they should sever all links with Britain. It is still possible for them to draw on what is left of Britain's goodwill in matters like the Common Market negotiations where Britain's own interests are not essentially in conflict with African interests.⁵⁰

It is apparent that Britain would like her former colonial countries especially her former West African colonies, to swallow the idea that their association with the European Economic Community (EEC) — which incidentally includes most of their major trade 'partners' — will be most beneficial to their economic well-being. Association with the EEC, Britain asserts, will provide just the type of trade conditions — aid, preferential trade relations and markets — all of which the former colonies need for their economic development. The African countries, however, are sceptical about this 'golden' opportunity that their association with the ECC will supposedly offer. Kofi Edjah of Ghana explains that the question as to whether or not to be associated with the ECC is not merely a problem of wanting large markets which offer preferential (reciprocal) treatment; it is not merely a problem of wanting trade to be liberalized:⁵¹

⁴⁸ *The Legon Observer*, Editorial, Vol. VIII, No. 17, 24th August 1973, p. 393.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 394.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 394.

⁵¹ Edjah Kofi, 'Association with the EEC — Relationship of Junior Partnership and Exploitation', *The Legon Observer*, Vol. VIII, No. 3, 9th February 1973, p. 50.

The non-associated countries also want to be sure that they are not running into an 'association' which seeks in a rather cunning and subtle manner to perpetuate their weaknesses: imperially initiated specialization which is fitted towards sectors with a low growth in demand nationally and internationally.⁵²

Amponsah maintains that the diabolical aim of the imperialist powers is covered up by phrases about the advantages of the duty-free sale of goods in the Common Market. But then, a closer look at this situation soon leads one to the discovery of the fact that in addition to non-equivalent exchange, the advantages of duty-free sale of goods is based on widening the gap between the prices of goods bought from the less developed countries and goods sold to them. The image he has of the European Common Market is very negative:

The European Common Market is nothing but collective colonialism in its new and most dangerous form which Dr. Kwame Nkrumah called neo-colonialism.⁵³

In order to achieve their neo-colonialist⁵⁴ aims the advanced capitalist states had to map out a new strategy to harness a considerable number of developing countries to their economy, to perpetuate their dependence. The capitalist states, says Amponsah, also try to regain their lost monopoly of economic relations with the developing countries as a result of the growing economic co-operation between these newly independent states and the socialist countries. The setting up of the European Common Market was a strategy to keep the developing countries dependent on Europe.⁵⁵

The European Common Market is a new, dangerous, and most sophisticated strategy being adopted by the advanced capitalist states to disarm, politically and economically, the developing countries and to break down their growing resistance to the neo-colonialist tendencies of imperialism which seeks to frustrate their industrialization.⁵⁶

As evidence of the fact that the advantages derived from the European Common Market are reaped by the capitalist states and not by the less developed countries Amponsah cites the example of the losses the exporters of raw materials suffered after the Treaty of Rome which brought the

⁵² Ibid., p. 50.

⁵³ Amponsah Peter G.K., 'Ghana and the Common Market', *Daily Graphic*, 23rd February 1973, p. 7.

⁵⁴ Neo-colonialism has been defined as the sum total of new political, military, economic and ideological forms of colonialism practised in the developing countries by the imperialist powers in the context of the disintegrating colonial systems; it sets out to maintain and enhance the position of imperialism in politically independent but economically underdeveloped states mainly by indirectly controlling their economies.

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 7.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 7.

European Common Market into being. Raw material prices fell so catastrophically that exporters of raw materials and food to the European countries suffered losses of approximately 15% as compared with the level of prices of manufactured goods. This writer, therefore, maintains that anyone who expects the economic integration of the European capitalist states to help normalize foreign trade with the developed countries, stabilize raw materials and reduce the prices of imported manufactured goods is living in a fool's paradise. He strongly urges Ghana not to make a mistake of joining the Common Market with its present position as a supplier of cheap raw materials because she will be put into a very disadvantageous position and will therefore be forced to sell her goods at extremely low prices.⁵⁷

African countries are also aware that the fall of the prices of raw materials is also due to the huge growth in the manufacture and industrial consumption of synthetic materials by advanced countries as substitutes for natural materials. From 1948-1962, for instance, the share of natural rubber in the export trade of capitalist countries dropped from 98 per cent to 77 per cent, while the share of synthetic rubber rose from 2 to 23%. The share of natural fibres dropped from 96 to 87%, with an increase of synthetic fibres from 4 to 13% to the total export.⁵⁸

It is also maintained by some Africans that it is not only the fall of the prices of raw materials which will affect them economically if they join the European Common Market. Africa's attention is also bound to be diverted from industrialization which is the most important step towards self-reliance, and will therefore be made to intensify the exportation of its natural and agricultural raw materials to earn foreign exchange, since export earnings are her main source of foreign currency.⁵⁹ These assertions are indicative of Africans' attempts to become self-reliant. In the light of these attempts Asiama-Ansong issues a strong warning to African states:

Why do we Africans still go on pondering whether or not to join the European Economic Commission (EEC) — a colonialist economic organization which seeks its own vested and valued interests? Some reactionary economic theoreticians are out to confuse us about the need to have some form of association with the EEC because of some microscopic advantages, and we should keep our minds sharp against them.⁶⁰

There are African writers who threaten that any attempt either consciously or unconsciously by any groups of businessmen or intellectuals, 'most of whose actions are tele-guided by foreign agents', to manipulate the

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 7.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 7.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 7.

⁶⁰ Asiama-Ansong, George, 'Africa and the EEC'. *The Legon Observer*, Vol. VIII, No. 12, 15th June 1973, p. 285.

African governments with the view to misleading them and drawing them into the dangerous economic, political, and military trap of the European Common Market 'will not be tolerated by the youth... whose future will be affected most by such action'.⁶¹ Our verification of this view by interviews convinced us that it is widely shared by many African scholars today.

The idea that the EEC is a military trap to Africa is based on the fact that it is linked with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). If African states join the EEC, some Africans assert, it would mean the surrender of their avowed policy of non-alignment. Amponsah sums up the consequences of Africa's association with the EEC as follows:

We will be compelled to betray the cause of African freedom, by the support we will be obliged to give to the imperialist suppression of the emancipation struggle in Africa. We will be compelled to sell our African birthright for a mess of neo-colonialist pottage.⁶²

Even though anglophone Africa has taken a lead in rejecting associations that would make Africa dependent on Europe, some francophone states have expressed increasing dissatisfaction with their commercial relations with the EEC, which means to a large extent their relations with France. They have been no less critical than other countries of the effect on their exports of the Common Agricultural Policy with France, above all, champion in the EEC. The genuine enthusiasm now shown for an all-embracing West African economic community by francophone states, notably Togo, reflects a desire to break out of the French connection.⁶³

Various Africans have written to emphasize the importance of Africa speaking with one voice. They realize that as individual countries they do not have the necessary bargaining power to obtain a really fair deal, but as a united front they can compel a recognition of their needs and their rights.⁶⁴ Forty-four African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP) now meet and form a united front to seek a relationship between the EEC and the non-European countries which assures free entry into the EEC of the exports of the non-Europeans and a new and expanded European aid programme, whose management the non-Europeans will share, and which will lay emphasis on the development of industry. Stabilization of export earnings, rather than prices, and relating them to the cost of industrial imports, is another aim of the Africans.⁶⁵

A contentious issue in the Yaoundé III negotiations is the European Development fund. As proof that the African states and their allies are

⁶¹ Amponsah Peter G.K., 'Ghana and the Common Market', *Daily Graphic*, 23rd February 1973, p. 7.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁶³ *West Africa*, No. 2965, 15th April 1974, p. 427.

⁶⁴ *The Legon Observer*, Editorial, Vol. VIII, No. 4, 23rd February 1973, p. 2.

⁶⁵ *West Africa*, No. 2955, 4th February 1974, p. 113.

envisaging new models for development they are demanding to know the amount which the EEC countries are going to provide. The ACP countries feel that their future planning requires some knowledge of the amounts which may be available while they also want more participation in the administration of the funds. This latter demand aims at correcting the fault in the aid schemes that have been in operation since independence. There seems to be considerable difficulty in working out the precise form of the industrial co-operation which the African countries seek, particularly what is called the 'transfer of technology'.⁶⁶ The African countries also want the 'rules of origin' to be simple, flexible, and liberal so that they may cover the semi-finished goods produced in Africa. These countries have, in the process of negotiations, broadened their demands and have reached a point where the sort of agreement they seek not only goes far beyond the much-criticized Yaoundé Convention or the limited Arusha one, but would also be free of the 'neo-colonialist' taint which made many Commonwealth countries, notably Nigeria,⁶⁷ reluctant to take part in what started officially as a re-negotiation of the Yaoundé Convention.⁶⁸

The Yaoundé III negotiations are striking for the historic co-operation of the African states in an effort to review their development framework. It appears that the Commonwealth and the old terms which governed the association of African states with the EEC will be buried. It is also not difficult to trace the influence of anglophone African states, particularly Nigeria and Ghana, on the current Yaoundé III negotiations. After reluctantly joining the negotiations Nigeria soon became leader of the other countries. The Brussels ACP Ambassadors, led by Mr. Olusola Sanu of Nigeria, have established themselves as a semi-permanent body.⁶⁹ Nigeria's leadership may be traced both to her articulateness in the cultural identity movement and the strong financial position and renewed development schemes she is enjoying now.

Mr. Sanu, the Nigerian Ambassador and Chairman of the first Committee of Ambassadors and Plenipotentiaries responsible for negotiat-

⁶⁶ *West Africa*, No. 2979, 22nd July 1974, pp. 882-883.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 882.

⁶⁸ The 44 countries of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group are: The nineteen countries of the Yaoundé Convention: Mauritania, Mali, Senegal, Upper Volta, Ivory Coast, Togo, Dahomey, Niger, Chad, Cameroon, Gabon, Central African Republic, Congo, Zaire, Rwanda, Burundi, Somalia, Mauritius, and Madagascar.

— The three countries of the Arusha Convention: Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania.

— Nine other Commonwealth African countries: Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, The Gambia, Zambia, Malawi, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland.

— Four other non-Commonwealth African countries: Ethiopia, Sudan, Liberia and Guinea.

— Five Commonwealth countries of the Caribbean: Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, Barbados, Grenada and the Bahamas.

— Three Commonwealth countries of the Pacific: Fiji, Tonga and Western Samoa. (Equatorial Guinea is still to be associated, Mr. Sekou Toure's Guinea is not yet participating. Guinea-Bissau is also eligible.)

⁶⁹ *West Africa*, No. 2979, 22nd July 1974, p. 882.

ing with the EEC future relations with all the associated countries and other countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific was interviewed by **Association News**. His views clearly establish a relationship between the African cultural identity movement and the current Yaoundé III negotiations. He considers that one of the objectives of the agreements with the Nine European countries should be:

... unlimited access to the European market for finished or semi-finished goods from Africa, and the African countries should be allowed to be 'masters of their own development plans.'⁷⁰

Mr. Sanu refrains from criticizing the Yaoundé Convention because 'a substantial number of African states were associated and they did not think it was a bad form of association'. He, however, makes no bones about the changes they, the newcomers, are envisaging. He says:

... since the majority of us are coming for the first time we would like to see the terms of the agreement between African states and Europe improve substantially. We believe there should be very little, if any, political connotation in the agreement — that as far as possible we should make it a completely commercial, economic and technical co-operation agreement which will give us a better deal with Europe.⁷¹

He points out that Nigeria has always been opposed to any political connotations being attached to the type of relationship between Africa and Europe:

... and Nigeria is not particularly anxious for any agreement that subordinates Africa to Europe in any way whatsoever.

This is the basis on which we are participating at the moment.⁷² Since some African countries are trying to diversify their trade with the world they are reluctant about rushing into the EEC before examining all the issues involved. Mr. Sanu says there are many development schemes which have been tried with very little fruit. This includes the scheme for the stabilization of prices through UNCTAD. The feeling expressed by African countries is that stabilizing earnings in terms of exports products without stabilizing the price of the products which Africans buy from Europe may not mean much because their problem is, as years go by, the amount of goods they sell in order to buy a unit of machinery which they need for the development of their infrastructure is no longer reasonable, and therefore such a scheme must be tied to a stabilization price of the imports which they receive.⁷³

⁷⁰ *Association News*, March-April 1974, No. 24, p. 3.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

During the first 'Development Decade' aid became a very important element of the relationship of most African states with Europe. Nigeria's attitude to aid is quite unequivocal:

Nigeria has no intention of denying those who enjoy this benefit, though I do not know whether aid is particularly the reason why we are discussing with Europe. For Nigeria, trade is more important than aid. We would like to see aid used for the promotion of economic co-operation... I don't believe that the reason for our discussion with Europe is necessarily for aid. Our example so far has been that we would like to be in command of our own economic plans and therefore some of the conditions which are attached to this aid from Europe will not be satisfactory to Nigeria.⁷⁴

Nigeria as leader of the African states negotiating with the EEC openly proposes to start on a new road for development which will not have to go via Europe. Sanu is optimistic about the agreement that will be reached in the Yaoundé III negotiations because for the first time, African countries are represented by a united front, and it is not easy for Europe to disregard a united Africa. The situation in the world today suggests that no continent is self-sufficient and Europe finds its future lies in evolving a relationship with those who produce certain materials which they need:

I do not think that Africa is coming to Europe to beg. I think we are coming to set up a relationship that is mutually beneficial to both of us because we have raw materials, we are developing. Nigeria, for example, has a market of, I hope, about 60 millions which will interest Europe in terms of selling their goods, selling their machinery for the infrastructure of that country; and therefore it is not a one-sided affair. We hope Europe will realize this and that in our discussions the demands of the African states will be treated in a mature manner and not viewed, as in the past, as a group of countries coming to beg. We are not, I repeat, not in Europe to beg. We are here to develop a relationship that will be mutually beneficial to us and to Europe and to arrange our relationship in a mature manner. It is a partnership that will create an atmosphere conducive to development in the future.⁷⁵

This appears to be a moment of destiny for a number of African states for implicit in these demands that are being made for 'a relationship that will be mutually beneficial to us and to Europe' is a complete rejection of the old colonial and the post-independence relationship in which Africa came to Europe to beg, after Europe had come to Africa

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 6.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 6.

to rule and dominate. The emphasis on the 'mature manner' in which the African demands are expected to be treated by Europe, condemns the manner in which previous negotiations have been conducted. It also is an admission by the African states that according to the past and existing agreements with Europe, they (the African states) behaved more like beggars than 'mature' and independent states. Both parties to the negotiations, it is hoped, have realized the basic weakness of the so-called development programmes of the past and now look for a 'partnership that will create an atmosphere conducive to development in future'.

At the 27th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, Moore, leader of the Ghana delegation to the Assembly, openly declared that 'unfair international trade and financial structure'⁷⁶ had adversely affected Ghana's development and that of other developing countries. He pointed out that what had so greatly affected the capacity of developing countries to accomplish the planned targets of the International Development Strategy was the growing debt burden. There was a growing credibility gap between intentions and performance in the International Development Strategy. He then announced Ghana's decision no longer to abide by the old development patterns:

We do not intend to continue to parade the corridors of the big powers with cap in hand begging for alms to feed our people and to develop our country... The Government of Ghana has adopted a policy of self-reliance. This policy implies less dependence on external assistance and on foreign aid in the development of our country.⁷⁷

African assertions are now expressive of a strong determination to throw off their economic dependence on the big powers. In addition to some Africans' realization that the International Development Strategies are unsuitable for them, they have come to conclude that all the professions of international solidarity may be more empty phrases. The United Nations has since its inception been too preoccupied with the containment of political problems. The larger issue, the far more dangerous tension arising from fantastic disparity in economic levels have not received the attention they deserve especially from the world powers.⁷⁸ The United Nations Charter, however, envisages the employment of international machinery for the promotion of economic and social advancement of all peoples.

More significant for international relations is the fact that, in reaction to African assertions, for the first time in 1974, the United Nations General Assembly was devoted entirely to economic affairs. The memorandum prepared for the meeting by about a hundred poor countries

⁷⁶ Moore E.N., Statement by the Leader of the Ghana Delegation, *The 27th Session of the U.N. General Assembly*, Accra, Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1972, p. 1.

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 1.

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 2.

shows that the General Assembly is expected to recommend steps which could at least stop the widening of the gap between rich and poor countries. The gap, Africans believe, is man-made, and therefore can at least be narrowed if the will is there. The memorandum states that the gap is the result of 'a system that was established at a time when most of the developing countries did not even exist as independent states'. It is, in other words, the result of colonialism, which established 'unjust' terms of trade for the dependent countries, which were obliged to provide raw materials cheaply while having no control over the monopoly prices at which they had to buy manufactured goods.⁷⁹

Even though it is still too early to assess the outcome of the United Nations meeting in which attention was given to the economic plight of the newly independent states, it is significant that an attempt is being made to alter the unofficial colonial relationships that still exist between the rich and the poor countries:

The main, and perhaps the only, contribution the present conference can offer is to make it clear to the richer countries that the grievances of the poorer about the terms of trade, however exaggerated, is one of the main political features of the world today.⁸⁰

D. AFRICAN UNITY AND ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION

There are African writers who are trying to discourage African society from looking outside itself for solutions, remedies and sustenance. African nations are also becoming increasingly aware that in order to safeguard their political and economic interests, they should act in larger groups, since as individual nations they can hardly make any noticeable impact on the international scene. It is this realization which has led to the historic solidarity of African states in defining what sort of relationships should exist between them and the enlarged EEC.

One of the major handicaps to industrialization efforts in individual African countries is the lack of large markets, and it deserves to be recalled that the search for markets for Europe's industrial products played a crucial role in the various colonial ventures. Equally crucial, therefore, is Africa's attempt to outgrow a stage of being used as a market for European goods. The question is how does Africa go about doing this?

To us, then, the choice before Africa is clear. The present obstacles to our economic development and general well-being can be removed by a concerted effort towards the creation of an African Economic Community that can be started on a regional basis. We have the physical and manpower resources needed for

⁷⁹ *West Africa*, No. 2965, 15th April 1974, p. 426.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 426.

rapid expansion; the highly skilled manpower can be trained in due course.⁸¹

Those who are opposed to Africa's association with the EEC maintain that the only way by which economic viability can be achieved is to unite and industrialize Africa, and to extend on this basis the reciprocal exchange between Africa, Asia and Latin American countries. Any method apart from uniting Africa and creating a large market capable of absorbing, on mutually advantageous and equal terms, large quantities of diverse goods produced by the developing countries is nothing but a surrender to imperialism.⁸² The basic problem, however, is how to reconcile industrialization with cultural identity.

In the *Newsweek* interview, Okoi Arikpo, Nigeria's Federal Commissioner for External Affairs, stated that now that the civil war and immediate period of reconstruction are behind, Nigeria's main foreign policy objectives are these:

First we want to use our political and economic influence to pull Africa together. We want to enable African countries to develop self-confidence and be more self-reliant, so that their voice in international affairs is more effective. In addition we want to see Nigeria take its natural place in world affairs, proportionate to its size.⁸³

It is evident from this foreign policy statement that Nigeria regards herself as being in a position to lead the other African states. As some recent events show, Nigeria is indeed using her influence to 'pull Africa together'. The case in point here is the leading role Nigeria is playing in the Yaoundé III negotiations with the EEC. Nigeria was also one of the states which recently initiated a proposal for fifteen anglophone and francophone African states to form a West African economic union. Arikpo regards this proposal for a West African economic union as only the beginning of an arrangement for trade between African countries on 'horizontal' lines as against the traditional 'vertical' lines with Europe.⁸⁴ This means that the West African countries, be they English-speaking or French-speaking, have come to realize the similarity of their political as well as economic interests. Those that are in sympathy with Europe's continued hegemony in Africa are suspicious of Nigerian influence. Arikpo's reply to the charge by some French critics that Nigeria is merely a 'Trojan horse' for non-French interests in Africa, is that Nigeria has no desire to replace French influence in Africa:

⁸¹ *The Legon Observer*, Editorial, Vol. VIII, No. 4, 23rd February 1973, p. 2.

⁸² Amponsah Peter G.K., 'Ghana and the Common Market', *Daily Graphic*, February 1973, p. 7.

⁸³ Arikpo Okoi, *Newsweek*, 4th March 1974, p. 12.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

But even if we did nothing, French political control over the francophone countries is bound to decrease.⁸⁵

In promoting the unity of English and French speaking countries, Nigeria supports the Chad Basin Commission, and the Niger Commission, institutions which cut across language barriers.⁸⁶

The contention of the editor of the *Legon Observer* is that no conscious African today can be naive enough to doubt that the Western economic world has not the slightest wish for the economic emancipation of African Africa, seeing in such a prospect a threat to their traditional position of dominance. He emphasizes that the defeat for 'this iniquitous bullying of the continent and its black peoples' can come only with maximum co-operation amongst Africans 'in the fateful area of economic organization'.⁸⁷

It does seem that the question of the economic co-operation of African states is becoming a unifying factor which will strengthen the Pan-Africanist Movement. This is so because the envisaged co-operation will be based on values believed to be common to Africans and a rejection of foreign ones. At the Second Ministerial Conference of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in his speech, Mr. Nzo Ekwangaki, the then O.A.U. Secretary General, observed that the promotion of inter-African trade is an urgent assignment and challenge, stressing that African states should make conscious and purposeful efforts to organize themselves to the best interest of their people. He warned:

If we fail to organize ourselves in an appropriate manner economically in defence of our own accelerated development and in our long-term interest, if we fall prey to those who are scheming to keep us for as long as possible hewers of wood and fetchers of water, the ECA would have failed in its mission to Africa... Africans need to be aware of, and ward off, the danger of allowing inter-African economic co-operation to become an instrument to the service of the interests of foreign industrialists and investors.⁸⁸

The view that the economic emancipation of Africa can come only from self-generated viable economic union among African countries is becoming nearly as strong and generally announced in the seventies as the cry for political freedom was in the fifties and early sixties.

E. AMBIGUITY OF AFRICAN VIEWS OF THE UNITED NATIONS

African self-assertions have as a goal the attempt to enable African countries to develop self-confidence, self-reliance 'so that their voice in

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁸⁶ *Association News*, March-April 1974, No. 24, p. 6.

⁸⁷ 'The Urgency of Co-operation in Africa', *The Legon Observer*, Editorial, Vol. VIII, No. 8, 20th April 1973, p. 170.

⁸⁸ *The New Ghana*, Vol. 2, No. 3, 1973, p. 3.

international affairs is more effective'.⁸⁹ As evidence of the importance of this goal Nigeria's main foreign policy objectives as given by Arikpo includes the desire, intimated by General Gowon to the United Nations in 1973, to change the structure of the Security Council:

At least one African state and one other Asian state besides China should be made permanent members.⁹⁰

This demand shows that African states are critical of the structure of the Security Council which does not reflect that all United Nations member states are treated as equals. The United Nations system in the General Assembly is favoured by Africans because it does not show that some states are 'more equal than others'. In their fight for international participation through the United Nations, Africans seem to stand for the principle of 'One state, one vote'.⁹¹ Mazrui has mentioned that there are important implications for the Africans' demands for effective representation on the Security Council. This view is shared by other Third World countries. The demand for a restructured Security Council is based on the belief that sovereign equality would help moderate the power of the big states. It does appear that the basic source of dissatisfaction with the United Nations system as it is now, stems from the fact that the new nation states, representing different cultures, have been given legal equality, but no respect for their cultural and human identity.

In his book, *America, Their America*, Clark tells of how his discussion with his two American friends about Nigeria's feelings over China's invasion of India ended up as an argument over neutrality and morals. When Clark pointed out that his sympathies went to India, as China appeared the aggressor, one of the Americans burst out:

'That's all well and good', the man said, 'but it doesn't alter the fact that that man Nehru is an ass.'⁹²

When Clark responded to say that was a stupid thing to say, both Americans confirmed what an American senator had said on television:

'Nehru for a long time has been riding the high horse of neutrality and all that. Now that he has been hit hard by the Reds, he wants help from the U.S. Let the so-called neutrals save India with their morals... For a long time he has been preaching that only the yellows and blacks of the world have a right to morality and judgment. Now they are fighting themselves and want the awful white man to step in.'⁹³

⁸⁹ Arikpo Okoi, *Newsweek*, 4th March 1974, p. 12.

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 12.

⁹¹ Mazrui Ali A., 'The United Nations and some African Political Attitudes', (1964) *International Organization*, Vol. XVIII, No. 2, p. 512.

⁹² Clark J.P., *America, Their America*, London, Heinemann, 1964, p. 52.

⁹³ Ibid., p. 52.

Clark gives this as one of the many inflexibly intolerant attitudes with which he clashed head on whilst he was in the United States. In the foreword to this book, Essien-Udom analyses some Africans' conflict with the Western societies as arising from intolerant attitudes. Pinning the conflict down to the United States, the venue of Clark's experience, he says because the Americans believe theirs to be an approximation of the ideal society, they believe also that they have a mission to extend the benefit of their experience even to the most unwilling of the 'human group'. Consequently, those who fail to accept the American experience as being valid for all humanity are regarded, at best, as ignorant, at worst, as immoral. He asserts:

These attitudes lie at the root of intolerance at home and the demand for conformity to their economic and political ideas abroad. This intolerance, reinforced by her present economic and military power, breeds diabolical arrogance in America's relations with other nations.⁹⁴

The cultural identity movement revealed in African writing has a strong sensitivity to nations and a world system which do not accept the cultural values of the weak countries. The general feeling amongst Africans is that if international co-operation makes for an inter-cultural rapport, Africans should not be bound to adopt foreign culture. On the contrary, they prefer freedom to pick and choose anything they consider worthwhile from the culture of any people and adopt it.⁹⁵ But, as Part II will show, culture also infiltrates and is not consciously 'picked'. Some Africans are determined to teach the world that something more comes from Africa than gold, rough diamond, copper, chromium ore, petroleum and cocoa:

The racist settlers on the African continent and their misguided allies outside must be made to see that Africans could live decently enough without adopting anything from anyone else's culture ... 'Our bath was wet before it rained.'⁹⁶

The intention of some Africans is to show that African culture can enrich. It would be good, they say, to let the Westerners understand that African culture is relevant to modern times, not only in the sense that it may be an attractive subject of study in Western universities, but in a sense that it can be lived. The interest taken by some white scholars in the study of African culture, in the same way as Western industrialists are interested in the raw materials produced in Africa, does not escape the critical pen of some African scholars.

⁹⁴ Ibid., pp. 9-10.

⁹⁵ Achampong A. Poku, 'Africa's Cultural Freedom', *The Legon Observer*, Vol. VIII, No. 8, 20th April 1973, p. 184.

⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 184.

Another very negative image of the United Nations that some Africans have is that expressed in the **Onitsha Market Literature**. In a tragic scene portraying the death of Patrice Lumumba, Ghanaian soldiers ask for an assurance that Lumumba will be well looked after as they hand him over to the American soldiers of the United Nations. After the departure of Ghanaian troops Lumumba is handed over to his enemies by the American United Nations forces. Just before a Belgian officer fires to kill Lumumba, he charges him for removing all the Belgians from the Congo — 'the land purely developed by us' — and for bringing in the Russians. Lumumba replies to blame not his enemies for his death but the United Nations:

Lumumba: Are you now handing me over to my enemy? I invited you to come and help in uniting my country and you have turned against me! I am now helpless and this becomes the hour of darkness ... But should I die, then bear in mind that the United Nations has killed me and my associates for it is within their power to prevent bloodshed.⁹⁷

When he dies his final words are:

Africa! Africa! The United Nations has killed us!⁹⁸

This Nigerian author uses Lumumba as a symbol of African unity within both the smaller context of the Congo and the wider one of a free and independent Africa. The United Nations is shown to be conspiring with the agents and forces which rally to prevent and destroy African unity. Even though this view is not shared by all Africans, negative images such as this do influence the attitude of Africans towards other states and the role played by world bodies in African affairs.

⁹⁷ Obiechina E.N., *Onitsha Market Literature*, London, Heinemann, 1972, p. 164.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 168.

PART II

INTRODUCTION

In Part I we presented a rather too general picture of African assertions which affect international relations today. That picture, however, serves to indicate that African voices made themselves heard at an early stage just as they are today. African actors (politicians, diplomats and journalists) and other scholars precisely express their reservations about the present international situation and they suggest possible solutions to some post-independence problems. In the chapters that follow attention will be given to the analysis of African identity where some of the cultural and psychological dimensions of the same problems appear. In this sense there is some convergence in the analysis of the African politicians' and writers' world. In addition to the expressions of their disenchantment with their independence, the present development strategies, the arrogance of the big powers and some United Nations actions, African writers expose some basic motivations underlying the African actors' verbal pronouncements regarding their internal and external policies.

Part I also reflects some contradictions that become apparent as Africans redefine themselves and their position vis-à-vis the big powers. Britain, for instance, is criticized for weakening relations within the Commonwealth. It would have been logical for Africans to accept the weakening of the Commonwealth links as a blessing since relationships within the Commonwealth are viewed as exploitation. This contradiction explains the ambivalent feelings Africans have concerning the dissolution of the Commonwealth. Similarly some of the modernizing African elite who criticize foreign aid as exploitation and neo-colonialism indulge in self-colonization and still want the same aid as is evident in the Yaoundé III current negotiations. The basic contradiction, however, seems to arise owing to Africa's seeking both industrialization and cultural identity. Part II is an analysis of African writers' views on these problems.

CHAPTER I

CHASING AFTER GODS NOT OUR OWN

Many Africans have written of the post-independence era as being a futile experience of Africans' chasing after gods not their own. Their feelings about it are summarized in Ayi Kwei Armah's words: 'No. It is exhausting, this chasing after gods not of our own making.'¹

The implication of this statement covers both the act of inheriting and working with the old colonial patterns and models as well as that of copying the colonial masters, wittingly or unwittingly, in the practice of independence. The hollowness and emptiness of African independence is attributed to both external and internal factors.

A. EXTERNAL REASONS — INDEPENDENCE BECOMES DEPENDENCE BY BRITISH DESIGN

The explosion of the independence drama of the 1950s, beginning in Ghana in 1957 and continuing in riotous form into the 1960s took the Western world by surprise. Africans had mounted their own brand of political struggle, and for a number of consequential reasons their former political patrons and masters were willing to take them seriously, at least provisionally and with qualification. In a sense this was forced on them,

... for in the first flush of their 'victory' over 'colonialism' and 'imperialism' the Africans were throwing defiance and challenge all over the place. In extreme cases like that of Nkrumah they were actually, in effect at least, 'telling the white man to go to hell' with his old lies, pretensions, and impertinent bullying; at many points in time and space they were calling upon him 'to disgorge some of the loot he had been greedily swallowing up out of the bounties of the African soil.'²

Ojukwu holds that in the face of this movement for African freedom the white imperialists changed their tactics. They decided to install puppet African administrations to create the illusion of political independence, while retaining the control of the economy.

¹ Armah Ayi Kwei, *The Beautiful Ones are NOT yet born*, Heinemann, London, 1969, p. 108.

² Jones-Quartey, K.A.B., *Africa as a Political and Economic Factor in International Relations — A Personalized View*, pp. 2-3 (unpublished, Legon—Ghana).

The direct empire was transformed into an indirect empire, that regime of fraud and exploitation which African nationalists aptly describe as Neo-colonialism.³

Ojukwu cites the example of Nigeria as a state whose leadership was placed in the hands of puppets who were servile and submissive to the British. The example given by both Ojukwu and Achebe to show how Britain's intentions were to buy off the African leaders and to alienate them from their people is that of the first prime minister of Nigeria who was a British knight.⁴ Because of this title of knighthood, the prime minister would be obliged to be a useful tool in the operation of the British indirect empire. Ojukwu and Achebe observe that Nigerians lived in the illusion of independence while in fact they were still being ruled from No. 10, Downing Street. The British still enjoyed the stranglehold on their economy; for according to imperialist thinking, only phoney independence is good for blacks.

The view of some African scholars is that the theory and practice of having and operating spheres of influence in Africa, settled at the Congress of Berlin in 1885, has not only persisted but remained and developed, into a constant factor—with variations and variants—in the politics of Africa. The Western powers gave the African states 'independence without content' so that they would continue to have spheres of influence in Africa. Professor Jones-Quartey maintains that:

Today the spheres of influence in Africa are shared among the principal members of the 'Old Guard', minus Germany in one sense and plus the United States and Russia in another sense. But except for those of them who still actually hold colonial territory in Africa, the Western powers have changed, or have had changed for them by the circumstances, the nature of the influence they exercise in their sphere.⁵

This view of Western powers having control over independent Africa is not confined to Anglophone African states; it would appear that the situation is even worse in Francophone Africa.

Houphouët-Boigny's sophisticated political games are firmly based in his apprenticeship to the glittering gods of Versailles, who both feed him French francs and give him not a chance to forget that 'aussi, la culture, la civilisation elle-même, est française'... Bokassa of the Central African Republic and other franco-African leaders, not excluding Senghor, are all completely enthralled by French culture and dominated by the French national cheque book. Senghor manages to dilute his own fixation with a lot of philosophic idealism about

³ Ojukwu Emeke, *The Ahiara Declaration*, Markpress, Geneva, 1969, p. 15.

⁴ Achebe Chinua, 'The Duty and Involvement of the African Writer', Cartey Wilfred and Kilson Martin, *The African Reader: Independent Africa*, Random House, New York, 1970, p. 166.

⁵ Jones-Quartey, K.A.B., *Africa as a Political and Economic Factor*, p. 7.

the uniqueness of the African contribution — past, present and future — to the world culture, and he projects African art at all times. But 'Négritude' carries limited appeal without the support of French goodwill and French francs, whether the francs are given in loans, direct grants or technical aid, or whether they accrue to the client state through trade.⁶

What makes the situation of foreign domination worse in Francophone Africa is that, in addition to their feeding on French francs and culture, there are numerous French administrators, technicians, businessmen and teachers of all levels distributed everywhere in Francophone West Africa and established as part of the scenery, the way there have never been and will never be English settler families and workers in the Anglophone West African countries. The London *Sunday Times* (of 10th October 1971) announced that the Ivory Coast's ministerial office suites have two offices of equal size: one for the African minister, the other, alongside, for his French 'advisor'.⁷ Even though this is an extreme case of dependence the analysis of African independence reveals that Britain and other metropolitan powers, by intention, did not grant full independence to their former colonies.

The other view is that even though Britain may have had good intentions at the granting of independence, in her cultural arrogance and her sincerity in believing British cultural institutions superior to the African, she made sure, when she moved out of Africa, that she left the Africans a legacy of her institutions.

B. INTERNAL REASONS — IMITATIONS AND ADAPTATIONS

1. *Under the Spell of European Heroes — The Love-Hate Complex*
 Africa, hurled and hurtling along the paths of day,
 Not yet awake;
 Her fitful march to grasp a new-born son, Freedom,
 Ready-made on Independence Day
 Wrapped in anguish and poverty and smiling of blood to let.
 Freedom? That ghoulish shade of her nightmare which beckons her,
 Sleepy,
 Through ominous bursts of equality and promised blood?
 Her Christmas son, the light of lights
 That snaps the chains from hands and feet
 And leaves the mind
 A haven for masters long kicked out?
 My tears and yours, our
 'Freedom'.⁸

⁶ Ibid., pp. 7-8.

⁷ Ibid., p. 8.

⁸ Amissah-Arthur Ekua Nyamba, 'My Tears', *Okyeame*, Vol. V, November, 1972, p. 11.

Amissah-Arthur clearly sees African independence as being weakened by both external and internal factors. The fact that freedom, 'a new-born son', was 'ready-made on Independence Day' and was 'wrapped in anguish and poverty' shows that even before Africans had grasped it, its failure was a foregone conclusion. Africa, on 'Independence Day', should have realized that the smile of independence was a smile 'of blood to let'. The image of a 'new-born son' is suggestive of a human being, a product of both hereditary and environmental factors. However favourable the environment in which the son is brought up may be, it will not change the 'ready-made' hereditary weaknesses he has. Armah has used the image of an 'old manchild' to describe the nature of Ghanaian independence.

It was a picture of something the caption called an old manchild. It had been born with all the features of a human baby, but within seven years it had completed the cycle from babyhood to infancy to youth, to maturity and old age, and in its seventh year it had died its natural death... The manchild looked more irretrievably old, far more thoroughly decayed, than any ordinary old man could ever have looked. But of course, it, too, had a nature of its own, so that only those who have found some solid ground they call the natural will feel free to call it unnatural.⁹

The suggestion is that the independence that Africa received was destined by its ready-madeness to become a 'shade of her nightmare' which, instead of smiling at her, haunts her. In the same vein Amissah-Arthur speaks of chains having been removed from the hands and feet but the African mind left 'a haven for masters long kicked out'.

Under the spell of European heroes that had been kicked out the African made himself a carbon copy of various aspects of European culture, either as a carry-over from colonialism or as a component of development. This admiration for European culture caused complexes for both the Europeans and the Africans. It contributed to European reassurance, European pride and racial arrogance. For the Africans and their independence it was even more disastrous. Awosika states:

For a long time and especially since political independence, the leaders and people of some of the developing countries have striven assiduously to convince the world (they have in fact been deceiving themselves) that they can afford what in fact they can, at best, only ill afford. They have been importing artificial oases of wealth into their dismal deserts of poverty: displaying their national 'Airlines', 'Navies', 'Chancelleries', Presidential palaces, Rolls-Royce, fabulous hotels, etc. Professional and personal attires, insignia and medallions and other paraphernalia complete the picture of the schizophrenic African living in his little world of make-

⁹ Armah Ayi Kwei, *The Beautiful Ones are not yet Born*, p. 73.

believe. Consumer goods of every description are in incredible abundance as in any big store in Europe and North America. The foreigner in parts of Africa is alarmed to find everything she needs within her arm's length: from Parisienne perfumes to Canadian furcoats. Indeed until she steps out into the scorching sunshine of Africa from the air-conditioned stores, could she be reawakened from this dream land to the fact that the store was not in Brisbane, Bonn, or Boston but in an African capital city. This is hardly a credit to this African city! What of the slums a few yards away?¹⁰

In other words it can be said that some Africans, under the spell of European heroes, have colonized themselves. In an attempt to have all the glories of Western culture, they have made themselves more dependent on the Western states that are exporters of these artificial oases of wealth. Armah puts these words into the mouth of a new man who, incidentally, is the voice of the author.

'We do not serve ourselves if we remain like insects, fascinated by the white people's power. Let us look inward. What are we? What have we? Can we work for ourselves? To strengthen ourselves?... in the end, we are our own enslavers first. Only we can free ourselves. Today, when we say it, it is a promise, not yet a fact... Freedom!...' The whole crowd shouted. I shouted, and this time I was not ashamed.¹¹

At the time when European rule was rejected, the elite had been so much impressed and fascinated by Western culture that they had lost many African cultural traits. They had internalized Western cultural values. In some cases, therefore, the imitation of the white people by some Africans was unintentional. Armah writes to say that there is nothing so disgusting as watching a black man trying at all points to be the dark ghost of a European. The men who claimed to be leaders of Africa came with clothes they might have been hoping to use at Governors' Balls on the birthday of the white people's queen, carrying cuff links that shone insultingly in the faces of men who had stolen pennies from their friends. They came late to meetings and spoke to their servants in the legal English they had spent their lives struggling to imitate, talking of constitutions and offering the people unseen ghosts of words on a paper held holy by Europeans. Armah maintains that a black man who has spent his life fleeing from himself into whiteness has no power if the white man gives him none. So even though these Africans came to speak of salvation, they had whites for their masters. In explaining the love-hate complex from which some African leaders suffered, he says that these leaders feared the white people, but after

¹⁰ Awosika, V.O., *An African Meditation*, Nigeria, Literary and Scientific Publications, 1967, pp. 208-209.

¹¹ Armah Ayi Kwei, *The Beautiful Ones are not yet Born*, p. 101.

the fear, what was at the bottom of their beings was not hate and anger. What they felt was love.

What they felt for their white masters and our white masters was gratitude and faith.¹²

Armah continues to say that some African leaders lived in a way that was more painful to see than the way white men had lived.

Is it true then, that after all the talk that is possible, this is the only thing men are looking for? There is no difference then. No difference at all between the white men and their apes, the lawyers and the merchants, and now the apes of the apes, our Party men.¹³

The second brand of apes, the Party men, are aping the earlier leaders who were aping the white men. This whole issue was a question of misplaced values since the leaders thought that the only way to show one's worth was to demonstrate ownership of expensive European things. Many of the masses followed the example of their leaders. Tobi Yao, in his article on 'More English than the English', attacks the Ghanaians as individual citizens for fleeing away from their culture.

Come! Let's admit it: in a number of ways the Ghanaian 'sophisticate' has pretensions to Englishness which beats Franco-philos to it. English middle-class habits, tastes, appetite at table, airs, and much more besides, permeate the individual behaviour of the collegemen and professional classes. We dress English, eat English, and speak English... As events have turned out, there is growing proof that we in Ghana are every bit English — except in the colour of our skin.¹⁴

According to Yao there are two groups of the 'more English than the English' Africans. There are those who, if they were confronted with the fact of their Englishness, would resist the allegation with all the gusto at their command for their conscience lies in the peace of their Anglicized climate. Then, on the other hand, there are a number of Africans who are English and are proud of it all the way. They affect English 'public school' accent, and they pose English. Both groups are not to blame, says Yao, for they were bombarded from childhood to youth with the 'baa-baa black sheep' education. When Dr. Busia, the former president of Ghana, was interviewed by Richard Wright, he was critical of what he called Nkrumah's tribal methods of enforcing his ends.

Wright: I take it that you wouldn't use such methods?

¹² Ibid., p. 95.

¹³ Ibid., p. 104.

¹⁴ Yao Togbi, 'More English than the English', *The Legon Observer*, Vol. I, No. 13, Dec. 1966, p. 17.

Busia: I'm a Westerner, he said, sucking in his breath, I was educated in the West.¹⁵

Not only was Busia proud of the fact that he was a Westerner, but during his regime Ghana became more dependent on the West; as a result, the Western countries saw him as a faithful ally who could be relied on, and who consequently could be taken for granted since his attitudes and reactions could always be predicted.¹⁶ Armah brings out the impressions and the feelings of the people towards the rule of these African Westerners under which they suffer.

Another push-baby passed, pushing a white and pink carriage. But inside the baby was black as coal, and it was stifling in a lot of woollen finery. The man remembered his friend Teacher's bitterness when he thought of all this. So this was the real gain. The only real gain. This was the thing for which poor men fought and shouted. This is what it has come to: not that the whole thing might be overturned and ended, but that a few black men might be pushed closer to their masters, to eat some of the fat into their bellies too. That had been the entire end of it all.¹⁷

This novelist represents the masses as disappointed at being colonized by their own people who are proud that they are Westerners.

An attempt has been made to explain in a rational way why some African states have deliberately been fascinated and dominated by Western models of development. Many Africans have assumed that the adoption of the technology and everything that goes with it of the boreal or rich nations is the only way out of their poverty. Some writers recommend the development of a truly tropical technology in an African situation.¹⁸ These models and experiments of a tropical technology can be tried only by Africans who are proud of being African, and who do not merely enjoy basking in the sunshine of the boreal nations. Whilst it is difficult to stop people from holding up for a model the manners and values of their mentors, Yao warns of the danger that the home-grown youth and the majority of the country dwellers may lose touch with those of alien ways.

The youth coming up who never saw the colonialists have their own ideas about propriety and that sort of thing. The politicians of tomorrow — if they forget this fact will do so at their peril.¹⁹

¹⁵ Tetteh A. Kofi, 'The Elite and the Masses', *The Legon Observer*, Vol. VIII, 21 April 1972, p. 178.

¹⁶ *The Legon Observer*, 25th February 1972, p. 70.

¹⁷ Armah Ayi Kwei, *The Beautiful Ones are not yet Born*, p. 147.

¹⁸ Muntu Oburoni, 'Ingredients of an African Ideology — The Strength of African Culture', *The Legon Observer*, Vol. V, 15 March 1970, p. 8.

¹⁹ Yao Togbi, 'More English than the English', *The Legon Observer*, Vol. I, No. 13, December 1966, p. 18.

This warning points to the alienation that has developed between the present elite in power or out of power (in the case of military regimes having replaced the old guard) and the home-grown elite and the masses. It also explains the amount of tolerance that the young elite show towards military coups.

Some African writers have made it their task to encourage African society to regain a belief in itself and to put away the complexes of the years of denigration and self-denigration. Achebe's novels as a whole are a brave and successful attempt to recreate the dynamic spirit of a living community.²⁰ The new brand of elite are determined in their rejection of foreign models and they are turning to their culture for principles that will underlie the envisaged restructuring of society. They are responding to the basic questions of the time such as:

What has Africa to contribute to the world? asked the learned professor. If you have no history create one, if you have no culture, invent one, for the question is being asked, and, brother, you must come forth with an answer, pronto.²¹

In his address to the Union of National Radio and Television Organizations, Colonel Acheampong called on member organizations to counter the distorted image created of Africa on foreign radio and television with the truth about Africa, and to present African culture in all its beauty and splendour, adorning the screens with heroes and martyrs of Africa.²² This is an attempt to replace European heroes with African ones. The general feeling is that the imitation of the whites has come to its limits, and it is becoming increasingly stupid and ridiculous. Some Africans have outgrown the stage of feeling insufficient which led to their voluntary imitation of foreigners. On the other hand, since whoever is being imitated tends to feel a sense of self-righteousness and pride, the former European masters are urged to take stock of their motives and realize how the development of Africa has been retarded by the imposition and imitation of Western values.

2. *Physical Appearance and Skin Colour*

Asiedu questions the wisdom of giving labels to people according to the colour of their skin. He argues that there is no sense in calling black people 'coloured' just as if 'black' is more of a colour than 'white'. Those whose judgment of a person is based on skin colour are advised rather to judge by the colour of blood.

They keep on saying we are coloured,
Our skin is black,

²⁰ Ngugi James, 'The African Writer and his Past', Heywood Christopher, *Perspectives on African Literature*, p. 17.

²¹ Awoonor Kofi, *This Earth, My Brother...*, p. 134.

²² *The New Ghana*, Vol. I, No. 25, 1972, p. 10.

Their skin is white;
 Black is a colour,
 But they keep on saying we are coloured.
 They keep on thinking we are different,
 Our blood is red,
 Their blood is red,
 Our Maker is theirs,
 Their Maker is ours,
 But they keep on thinking we are different.
 They keep on believing they are better,
 Our breath will cease,
 Their breath will cease,
 This black will change;
 That white will change;
 But they keep on believing they are better.²³

This poet is attacking the racial arrogance of those who believe that they are different and better because they are not black. His reference to basic common factors such as the colour of blood, and the Common Maker, stresses the humanness of mankind and the fact that people may not be evaluated according to outside appearance. The argument exposes the weakness of claims to superiority based on the colour of the skin. Asamoah is critical of the inferiority colour complex. He says:

Why do you weep
 Because you are black
 And belong to a race
 Which all seek to dominate?²⁴

In a way the whip hits at both the superiority and inferiority colour complexes.

The original attitude of Africans, when they first met the White people, was that whiteness was a disease. Someone who first reported that he had seen white men who were like the white piece of chalk, which Africans kept in their houses and with which their guests drew lines on the floor before they ate kola nuts, was ridiculed. The belief was that he had seen either an albino or a leper. The polite name for leprosy in one West African language is 'the white skin'.²⁵ At this stage the black people could not have had any feelings of skin colour inferiority. After the white colonial masters had imposed their culture on the Africans, whiteness became associated with the Western culture which was highly admired by some Africans. At the stage when all things African were despised and Africans aspired to being white, the

²³ Asiedu Lawrence, 'Song of Africa', Sangster Ellen Geer, ed., *To Know my Own*, p. 43.

²⁴ Asamoah Ani, 'Black Pride', Sangster Ellen Geer, ed., *To Know my Own*, p. 100.

²⁵ Achebe Chinua, *Things Fall Apart*, London, Heinemann, 1958, p. 67.

black skin became a hindrance. This was a kind of negative ethnocentrism. Awoonor dramatizes it in this description:

She fell madly in love with a Swiss gentleman. Secretly she wanted a mulato baby, fair with long hair. When the man left for Europe she pursued him. Two years after she came home with a fair baby girl with long hair. The species must be improved. They have stayed black for too long, and black is not beautiful. Her mother and her aunts in Cape Coast screamed over the baby, What a beautiful baby, and named her She Who was Born in the White Man's Country.²⁶

One would have believed that this was a love affair of colour blind people, but the lady's intentions were to improve her black species and she shared that view with her mother and her aunts.

Most African writers are critical of the attempt by some Africans, especially ladies, to identify themselves with the Europeans in appearance. Awoonor describes a social gathering which was attended by politicians, transport owners, editors, lawyers and doctors. His comment about the women who formed by far the larger proportion of the patrons is as follows:

Black women with heavy make-up and fixed expressions on their faces. Their nails looked to Essi like red claws, their breasts swelled beneath the shining silk.²⁷

The novelist finds the looks of these blacks distasteful. He gives the impression that the use of heavy make-up is to be found in high society. In his other work, however, Ekwensi shows how the city women, even with little formal education and money, change their physical appearance:

This was a girl who belonged strictly to the city. Born in the city. A primary education, perhaps the first four years at secondary school; yet she knew all about Western sophistication-make-up, cinema, jazz... This was a kind of girl whom Sango knew would be content to walk her shoes thin in the air-conditioned atmosphere of department stores, to hang about all day in the foyer of hotels with not a penny in her handbag, rather than live in the country and marry Papa's choice.

As she sat down, Sango put her age definitely at sixteen. Do not be deceived by those perfectly natural breasts. Girls ripen quickly in the city—the men are so impatient. But why did she put rouge on her naturally blooming cheeks? She was pretty enough without it; and besides, it did not blend.²⁸

²⁶ Awoonor Kofi, *This Earth, My Brother...*, p. 134.

²⁷ Ekwensi Cyprrian, *Glittering City — Lokotown*, London, Heinemann, 1969, p. 113.

²⁸ Ekwensi Cyprrian, *People of the City*, London, Heinemann, 1963, p. 29.

The madness of the 'heavy make-up' is associated with Western sophistication. As against this sophistication, which is regarded as being un-African, natural beauty is preferred. This young girl's cheeks were all right without the rouge. The red lips and cheeks did not blend with the black background. Ekwensi associates artificial beauty with the immorality and the evils of Western culture. In the frankness characteristic of the Onitsha Market Literature, 'independent women' and 'lip-painted ladies' are openly called 'harlots'.²⁹ It is interesting to note that the independence of women is regarded as being as much of a vice as being a harlot. The implication is that it is the independent women who have flown away from 'marrying Papa's choice' or general societal control who distort their physical appearance. They are led into this practice by their weak and misplaced morals.

Many writers describe beautiful women as being natural:

Bintu was indeed beautiful. She never wore dresses like Konni. Perhaps that was why he did not go for her in a mad way. Her beauty was the type that makes homes. Nothing violent. She had a very nice black skin, dark eyes that looked a trifle sleepy. She walked with a roll of her hips, but it was a natural roll. Nothing studied. She was fresh and sweet, and she liked blue... He had never doubted that Bintu was good and beautiful, but she was not Westernized, and she did not catch his imagination. Sometimes he hated her. He did not see why she did not wear the new fashions and highheeled shoes. Why was she so simple?³⁰

The type of beauty that makes homes is an honest one. Natural beauty is associated with honesty and simplicity. Bintu is not Westernized and she has natural goodness since the blue colour symbolizes the life-giving forces. Aluko describes Nikuro as being the most beautiful damsel on earth. Her hair was black, and her teeth were as white as snow. This is a recognition of the fact that African beauty has its own place not only in African circles but in the wide world. There is no doubt about what the values of these writers are.

The tendency for African women to try to look European and African men to be attracted by Westernized ladies arises, as the Black Renaissance Movement of Nigeria holds, owing to the fact that:

Both the Bible and the Koran, documents fabricated by white ethnocentrists, are unanimous in attributing the black human pigmentation to Noah's curse, thus portraying it as a permanent brand that condemns the wearer to eternal damnation... The inevitable reality is that for most of man's history, blackness has always been regarded by non-black races as a deviation from the

²⁹ Obiechina E.N., *Onitsha Market Literature*, London, Heinemann, 1972, p. 94.

³⁰ Ekwensi Cyprian, *Lokotown*, pp. 23-25.

human norm, not just another variant in the numerous shades of the human species.³¹

With reference to the question of identity in physical appearance, the Black Renaissance Movement mentions that the black man is prepared to establish parallel black institutions to serve the interests of black people, much as the present ones serve the interests of white people, notwithstanding their camouflage under 'World'-prefixed appellations:

For years, black women have been humiliated at white-sponsored Miss 'World' contests. Naturally, the standards of beauty at such contests are white, and automatically exclude black women as possible winners. If we are to expect our women to find beauty in their black features and still be able to indulge in such feminine fancies, an alternate form must be provided where they would indeed be judged by black standards of beauty.³²

J.P. Clark cites an interesting case of an Afro-American who is a victim of both inferiority and superiority colour complexes. This black girl in New York city detested the adjective black used to describe her. She claimed that she was no black nor anything but a Negro. She defined a Negro as a combination of strains of all the peoples in the world. When she was asked whether any one of these strains could prove dominant, she replied that the combination made her a new distinct whole. When Clark confessed to her that it was the first time he had heard that argument, she remarked: 'But you Africans are different. You can talk!'³³ Obviously, the American culture that she has adopted makes her ashamed of her black skin colour which reminds her of her African origins. This is, indeed, a unique case of the combination of negative and positive skin colour values; of course, her problem has more to do with culture than with the colour of her skin.

Another interesting case is that of Soyinka's Joe Golder, a three-quarter white American, who hated his face and practised one horror after the other on it:

... Joe Golder turned up in the studio one day with crinkled newsprint stuck raggedly all over his face, reward of afternoons of exposure to the burning sun...

'Just what masquerade do you think you are?' — Kola, near-hysterical with anger.

'Your sun is more potent than I thought...'

'When will you give up trying to be black?'

'When I look three-quarter black. I feel like Esau, cheated of my birthright.'

³¹ Black Renaissance Movement, *The Philosophy of Black Renaissance*, Lagos, 1970, pp. 13-14.

³² Ibid., p. 34.

³³ Clark, J.P., *America, Their America*, London, Heinemann, 1964, p. 137.

'You look like Jacob with shop-soiled fur on his face.'³⁴ Apparently Joe Golder has been influenced by the Black Power Movement which claims that black is beautiful. Since he identifies himself with African culture, he tries to change his mistaken identity. In spite of the well-considered reasons that Joe Golder gives for his wanting to be black, Soyinka cartoons him as an individual as well as all those who are obsessed with the idea of black beauty.

'I like black people, I really do. Black people are exciting, their colour has such vitality, I mean it is something really beautiful, distinctive...'

Quite unfairly, because he knew it wasn't true, Sagoe said, 'You are mentally white, you know.'

'It sounds Rousseau but I have a right to feel the way I do. Black is something I like to be, that I have every right to be. There is no reason at all why I shouldn't have been born black.'

'You would have died of over-masturbation, I am sure.'

'You enjoy being vulgar?'

'... Look, the truth is that I get rather sick of self-love. Even nationalism is a kind of self-love but can be defended. It is this cult of black beauty which sickens me. Are Albinos supposed to go and drown themselves, for instance?...'

'So you don't find your skin beautiful?'

'I have never given it any thought. I saw a white girl at a party the other night and I considered her beautiful. That is an aesthetic judgment. I cannot remember much about her colour. When you talk of this black vitality I can almost hear you salivating and since I happen to be black — neither fault nor credit to me — I find it all nauseating.'³⁵

What Sagoe, who evidently is Soyinka's voice, finds nauseating is the cult of a tiger having to proclaim his tigrity, as Soyinka expressed it on another occasion. This is what makes *Négritude* and the 'black is beautiful' slogan unacceptable to some Africans. They hold that 'three-quarter whites' and 'mentally white' blacks are responsible for this sentimentality. They find it to be as much of a self-love mental and sexual perversion as 'over-masturbation'. We are reminded that the hallmark of beauty is that which remains serene, genuine, and as natural and as untouched as possible — the raw beauty. Awosika says:

By far the most serious, the most ominous and perhaps the most controversial crisis that has hit (and is hitting very hard indeed) the African Personality, in this generation, is the increasingly popular fashion of wearing wigs... It is in inter-racial relations

³⁴ Soyinka Wole, *The Interpreters*, London, Heinemann, 1972, pp. 101-102.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 195-196.

that the wearing of wigs by Africans attains its extraordinarily distasteful absurdity, reducing the whole of human natural beauty and grace to a mere gimmick. The individual of African descent wearing the long straight 'human' (or animal) hair or who is wearing nylon or some other material fashioned to imitate the type of hair that differs generally from that of his own race has obviously capitulated and inwardly admitted that he is not the best specimen of the natural beauty to be found in his own race.³⁶

Henshaw describes a lady who has just returned from 'London', 'Paris' and 'Las Palmas' and who, on hearing that her photo was in the newspapers, says that if she had known that a photo would be taken of her as she alighted at the airport, she would have put on her foreign hair styles. The wearing of wigs meets the desire to look foreign.

Armah gives a description of a husband and wife quarrelling over the practice of stretching hair:

Oyo came out and went back into the kitchen, holding her iron comb in her hand.

'Jesus!' he said when he saw her, 'You aren't going to do that, are you?'

'I am...'

'That must be very painful', he said. Immediately, he was wishing he had not said it.

Oyo put the comb back among the coals, then lifted up her head and said, 'Of course it is painful. I am just trying to straighten it out a bit now, to make it presentable.'

'What is wrong with it natural?'

'It's only bush women who wear their hair natural.'

'I wish you were a bush woman, then', he said.

She laughed rather bitterly and said, 'You men are hypocrites.'

'You would be angry if we didn't do these new things.'

'Some would.'³⁷

The wearing of wigs and stretching of hair are new practices that are indulged in with a view to becoming modern and presentable. Most writers condemn these practices and look upon them as a veritable affront to the African Personality. Not only women are blamed for stretching their hair but even men who condone the practice. Clark goes further to ridicule the Afro-American men who stretch their hair and wear curlers. An Afro-American lady comments that all these horrible practices are an outcome of years of slavery. The whites are imitated in everything even to the point of wanting to bleach the skin. Clark also traces the origin of the practice of hair straightening:

Do you know the hot stretching-comb was actually invented in

³⁶ Awosika, V.O., *An African Meditation*, pp. 118-120.

³⁷ Armah Ayi Kwei, *The Beautyful Ones are not yet Born*, p. 151.

a farm down South for the black women whom their white masters desired and possessed by force? Well, have they got their hands on you too, and so early?³⁸

The young writers appeal directly to the African women to keep 'nature natural'. They hold that the gods are angry and will not accept any sacrifice:

The gods weep
The spirits mourn
They reject the kola,
They accept not the egg,
They refuse every sacrifice.
They weep and mourn
Because the black of Africa,
The noble black,
Is condemned —
It's erased
By the girls of Africa.
They weep and mourn
Because the black woolly hair
Is covered.
It's covered
With some silky bulky material
That triples each shapely head.
They weep and mourn
Because the natural black lips
Are painted red and pink.
Let the girls of Africa
Take heed of this reaction,
And keep nature natural
To avoid an impending doom
From the gods
And the spirit.³⁹

The attitude of this poet is representative of the general negative feelings writers have concerning the distortion of physical appearance and skin colour in an effort to try to look foreign.

3. *Dress*

Dress is not only a means of asserting identity, it serves to project culture and personality. As dress is a means of expression it can have an impact in international or inter-cultural relations. Newsmen and commentators often go to great lengths describing the clothes of celebrities and royalty on august occasions.

³⁸ Clark, J.P., *America, Their America*, p. 67.

³⁹ Asiedu Lawrence, *To Know my Own*, pp. 40-41.

Aluko gives a picture of African values towards dress at the end of the colonial period and he describes his popular character, Benjamin Benjamin:

At this point the proceedings were further interrupted by the entrance of a magnificent figure. He wore English clothes, like Johnson, the District Officer's clerk, but, judging from the superiority of his worsted suit to Johnson's shabby tussore, he was of far greater importance and learning. A walking-stick swung from his right hand and a pipe drooped from his mouth. A grey Bourdillon hat topped the six feet, and he wore black, pointed shoes. . .

The two white men watched the newcomer take his seat, the younger man with curiosity and a trace of annoyance at this educated black man who insisted on wearing the white man's warm clothes in the hot humid weather.⁴⁰

Firstly, Benjamin Benjamin is identified with Johnson, the District Officer's clerk who also wore English clothes. To the minds of the people at the meeting Benjamin Benjamin was of greater importance and learning. Aluko reveals how deceptive this kind of judgment based on clothes can be. Not only does Benjamin Benjamin have little education, but at the end of the novel, he is discovered to be a crook and an impostor. The image that Benjamin Benjamin cuts to the white men at the meeting is that of an educated black man who lives in an unreal world. To them Benjamin's dress is absurd and annoying, but it is interesting to note that they also believe that clothes are a projection of the amount of education the wearer has. Achebe shows how the Umuofia Progressive Union (Lagos Branch) was offended by the way Obi was dressed up at the reception they had organized for him:

Everybody was properly dressed in agbada or European suit except the guest of honour, who appeared in his shirt-sleeves because of heat. That was Obi's mistake Number One. Everybody expected a young man from England to be impressively turned out.⁴¹

Education to the Africans did not only mean acquiring the white man's knowledge and skills but also adopting the white man's clothes and habits. Obi's values were contrary to those of his people even though he was decently and properly dressed up for the tropical weather. A highly educated Obi could have exchanged his clothes with a half-educated Benjamin Benjamin according to the confused value scale of some of his people.

In her *Reminiscences*, Adelaide Casely-Hayford observes that the outlook of women has altered completely. Instead of blindly copying

⁴⁰ Aluko, T.M., *One Man, One Matchet*, London, Heinemann, 1965, pp. 6-7.

⁴¹ Achebe Chinua, *No Longer at Ease*, p. 31.

European fashions, which are made to suit a white woman's personality, the African women now have come to realize that every race has its own distinctive dress, with its own appeal — and its own suitability for particular climatic conditions. She remembers how on the occasion of the visit of the prince from England she tried and failed to persuade women to put on native costume. After pointing out that it would be much more picturesque, and would not only enhance their appearance but would show that they were proud of being Africans, she was the only one that day who wore a plain black satin lappah and an embroidered boobah, worked by black men. She emphasizes that the effect of her dress on this occasion, as the prince pointed out, was altogether charming.⁴² In a live situation at a party, in Aluko's *Chief the Honourable Minister*, a nurse, dressed in her national attire, is introduced:

'Your Excellency, this is Miss Gloria Oke, Senior Nursing Sister at the General Hospital. His Excellency the Jordarmenian Ambassador in Afromacoland.'

'Most charmed, most honoured, most delighted to meet you, my charming lady! In the course of my travels through many countries in the world I have met many women. But I'm still to meet a woman more beautiful than the Afromacolese woman in her national attire.'

Gloria giggled at the compliment.

'I have also wondered why our women will not dress always in their native dress', said the man in white robes, adjusting the sleeves of his agbada. 'Look at Miss Oke now. Does she not look beautiful in her native dress? You just look at her.'⁴³

What in olden days would have looked a sign of uncouthness is today appreciated as beautiful and charming. Africans are finding out that their native wear, maybe with some modifications, is not only an identity mark but has its own distinctive value and beauty. In all walks of life, from the Holy Orders to charlatans, in institutions such as universities, the army, in clubs and in societies, everyone tends to dress to meet the occasion. This has not been the case in Africa. The climate or the weather, for instance, has not been considered as a decisive factor, in choosing the ideal wear for each occasion. There seems to be little sense in the university graduates wearing heavy black gowns in the tropical heat of West and Central Africa, but since it is a colonial legacy, some people still do it. Whether Africa needs to make any special attires available in her academic, religious, legal and certain other institutions is one salient question. The other question is whether Africa can provide such attires or other ornaments that will be distinctively African, thus

⁴² Casely-Hayford, Adelaide, 'Reminiscences', *Africa in Prose*, London, Penguin, 1969, pp. 137-138.

⁴³ Aluko T.M., *Chief the Honourable Minister*, London, Heinemann, 1970, p. 98.

invigorating Africa's cultural background and selling African culture to the world.⁴⁴ In his lectures Kwamena Bentsi-Enchill of Ghana comes out openly to say:

It is obviously about time that we men gave thought to our dress. And this applies not only to our traditional cloth but also to heavy English clothes and the hard collars and ties which we often torture ourselves with in the heat of our climate. For the development of the cloth we might borrow inspiration from something like the Roman toga, if necessary. And for the European dress which obviously has so much to recommend it on the grounds of elegance, versatility and convenience, we would do well to seek inspiration from Tanzanian and Zambian attempts at simplification. Some types of Indian and Chinese dress are also suggestive. But it really is inexcusable that we should not for so long have made any effort to modify our dress to suit our climate and convenience, after due exercise of our sovereign right to borrow what ideas we please from the rest of the world. And our attitude in this matter provides ample illustration of the neglectful way in which we have been allowing our customary law to lose its power to advance the purpose of our community.⁴⁵

Bentsi-Enchill refers to the Ghanaian cloth which men wear and is rather heavy for that climate, but maybe a little less torturing than the heavy English clothes.

Soyinka gives us a glimpse of the husband and wife in an identity crisis. Monica, a white woman, is contrasted with her husband Ayo. She is natural in her dress and reactions at the party while Ayo is pretentious and over-conscious of protocol. Ayo's behaviour is typically more white than the whites'.

'Darling, if the Queen was attending a garden party, would you go dressed without your gloves?'

'I've said I am sorry, Ayo. I really am. Perhaps I had better return home.'

'But would you? Answer my question. Would you attend the same party with the Queen without gloves?'

'I really don't know, Ayo. I never moved in such circles.'

'Darling, I am surprised at you. These are simple requirements of society which any intelligent person should know.'⁴⁶

The irony of the situation in this scene is that Ayo, an African medical practitioner, is more concerned about the English social requirements than his English wife. He wants the English societal model of dress to

⁴⁴ Awosika, V.O., *An African Meditation*, p. 117.

⁴⁵ Bentsi-Enchill Kwamena, *Institutional Challenges of our Time*, Accra, Legon University Press, 1971, p. 19.

⁴⁶ Soyinka Wole, *The Interpreters*, pp. 40-41.

prevail in tropical Africa even to the discomfort and embarrassment of his English wife. The fact that Ayo shares his identity crisis with other members of the elite is clear when he asks his wife at the party to look around and see for herself that even those in native dress are wearing gloves. Why should the wearing of gloves be so important in a hot climate even for the ladies in native costume? The English influence on African wear is absurd in this case.

Armah describes what he calls the 'leftover British craziness' in the civil service:

The office fills up as the day clerks enter, first the small boys and messengers, then the other clerks. About nine-thirty the Senior Service men come in, each with his bit of leftover British craziness. This one has long white hose, that one colonial white white. Another has spent two months on what he still calls a study tour of Britain, and ever since he has worn, in all the heat of Ghana, waistcoats and coats. He would have made a good Obedient Boy of the Empire on a Queen's Birthday.⁴⁷

Armah is contemptuous of the colonial thinking of the Senior Civil Service men which is reflected by their colonial dress. The expression 'colonial white white' describes both their dress and their thinking. Obviously the three-piece suits that are worn by the Senior Civil Service man who has just returned from a so-called study tour of Britain reveal what educational value such tours have for the civil service in Africa.

To discourage women from copying blindly foreign fashions, the young poet, Nkrumah, says that the gods are angry and that they will punish the new black woman who delights in 'the alien folly':

Never, this is never our black woman,
A woman, our own woman,
Who now carries a fur-hat on her head,
Gives colours to her body and nails
And wears sandals that stand on spikes.
This is not my mother's daughter
Who only dresses herself
To get warmth and give pleasure
But not to startle
The veins of men.⁴⁸

This poet states that dress is meant to give warmth and pleasure and should not be used for ulterior motives. He associates the adoption of foreign fashions by African women with low moral standards.

4. *Language and Names*

African languages remain among those citadels of African culture

⁴⁷ Armah Ayi Kwei, *The Beautiful Ones are not yet Born*, p. 128.

⁴⁸ Nkrumah Ababio S., 'The Black Mother', Sangster Ellen Geer, ed., *To Know my Own*, pp. 90-91.

which have not completely succumbed to foreign influences. These languages are about the only thing on which the Africans still claim absolute and unassailable authority. African languages are a source of invaluable pride to many Africans of this age. Most of these languages are unique, original and intensely African. Awosika observes that language is an essential and powerful instrument of diplomacy. The visiting head of state insists on speaking the official language of his own country, not necessarily out of pride — for he may, in fact, be a great exponent in the host country's language, but because, all in all, force or fuss must be met with equal force or fuss.⁴⁹ He further mentions that the languages of Europe dominate science, technology, economics and other disciplines. It would have enhanced the African Personality if, at least, one of the African languages were used in world organizations which are dominated by influential European languages today. These European languages enjoy a predominance even over Chinese which is spoken by over one quarter of the world population.

Even though it is true that it will be difficult to erase English and French from the face of Africa, especially because of their international tender and because of the desire for economic and industrial development in Africa, a study of attitudes towards foreign languages and vernaculars on the African forum will be interesting. Here is a typical colonial attitude towards languages:

'Lediz and gentlemans', he began. One or two people looked round to note that there was no lady present, but the chairman refused to be embarrassed. Rather he showed his upper incisors by way of an austere grin.

'Heh! heh! heh!' he laughed, and went on to speak in English to show himself above the general audience who spoke in Igbo. 'Your chairman didn't pass Cambridge but I get people like that. I don't know book but I be your chairman.' There was a subdued murmur from the farther end of the room.⁵⁰

The ability to speak English, the language of the master, is considered a status symbol, especially in the case of those who are not highly educated. Agunwa is quick in trying to correct this view: 'Do not think that speaking English means knowledge or wisdom.'⁵¹ This piece of advice is given to someone who knows nothing about the wisdom and truth that lies buried in African proverbs. In spite of his ability to speak English, Benson does not know the truth behind the proverbs: 'A man's in-law is his third relation', and 'When an animal itches it scratches itself against a tree; but when a man itches, he goes to another man to scratch him.'

⁴⁹Awosika V.O., *An African Meditation*, p. 122.

⁵⁰ Agunwa Clement, *More Than Once*, London, Longmans, 1967, p. 6.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 146.

Aluko, in his *Kinsman and Foreman*,⁵² gives an illustration of how the chief accorded the first African district engineer respect by getting a tribesman who rose to make a formal tedious speech of welcome in English, spiced with irrelevant passages from Shakespeare and from Scriptures. This was true to colonial tradition. On the other hand, Titus, the district engineer, said a few words in Yoruba. In *One Man, One Wife*,⁵³ Aluko describes an interesting controversial meeting of the vicar, the catechist and two illiterate church elders. Royasin, the catechist, said something in English which aroused the curiosity and envy of the two church elders. Thereafter the vicar and catechist embarked upon a lively exchange in English, while the other two men look in admiration from one to the other as the conversation then proceeded on a plane beyond their understanding. The normal reaction of the elders should have been that of calling the vicar and catechist to order for speaking in tongues in their presence, but the English language is so much venerated that their reaction to this rude practice of using English in the presence of old and illiterate people is that of admiration.

Djoleto cartoons the language efficiency of an experienced court clerk of mixed blood, Mr. Roberts:

He had forgotten all his English except officialese, models of which were a-plenty on the files. In the office he spoke a mixture of English and the vernacular and thus achieved greater linguistic efficiency than he would have either in pure English or in pure vernacular, and, in this linguistic hybrid, he was capable of displaying on occasion perverted insight or genuine lucidity of mind.⁵⁴

A follow-up of Mr. Roberts' actions shows that there was nothing genuine or lucid about them and all that he managed to display was his emptiness and corruption and how he had gone to seed. Another interesting cartoon is that of a lady who is mixed up in language identities. After her two days' visit to Paris she comes back to Nigeria already half-French and half-English:

Indeed she taught me the gentle art of punctuating my sentences in English with *s'il vous plaît*. This was a *sine qua non* in polite conversation. I have heard her on occasions, at her abusive best, call an offending houseboy 'a pig-headed son-of-a-bitch, *s'il vous plaît*'.⁵⁵

This lady, unfortunately, has her companions in Africa. The author succeeds in showing that beyond her speech being ridiculous, she does not understand what '*s'il vous plaît*' means. Armah goes further to ridicule Africans who struggle to talk like Englishmen:

⁵² Aluko T.M., *Kinsman and Foreman*, London, Heinemann, 1968, pp. 135-136.

⁵³ Aluko T.M., *One Man, One Wife*, p. 157.

⁵⁴ Djoleto Amu, *The Strange Man*, London, Heinemann, 1967, p. 209.

⁵⁵ Opara Ralph, 'Lagos Interlude', *Africa in Prose*, p. 348.

His nostrils every few seconds accomplished an involuntary sideways twitch which made his attempts to adopt an air of importance not just ridiculous but actually irritating in a special way in which the efforts of a Ghanaian struggling to talk like some Englishman are irritating.⁵⁶

The point is that this unnatural and affected speech is as much irritating as the 'Masas' and 'Sahs' in pidgin English.

In spite of the fact that there are Africans who become professors of one of the European languages in Africa or even abroad, such Africans are not natural custodians of the language. Achebe traces the rebellious attitude of Africans towards the study of English, especially if it is overdone, and more so if it is at the expense of the mother tongue. Whilst Obi was in England for studies, his longing for home sometimes gave him a strong feeling of being ashamed of studying English for his degree. He spoke Ibo whenever he had the least opportunity of doing so. Nothing gave him greater pleasure than to find another Ibo-speaking student in a London bus. But when he had to speak in English with a Nigerian student from another tribe he lowered his voice. It was humiliating to have to speak to one's countryman in a foreign language, especially in the presence of the proud owners of that language. They naturally would assume that one had no language of one's own. When Obi got back home in Umuofia, he valued all the more how his people made a great art of conversation. He wished that the English were there to see men, women and children who knew how to live, whose joy of life had not yet been killed by those who claim to teach other nations how to live.⁵⁷

Bentsi-Enchill observes that time has come for Africans to take a new look at the problem of communication with broad masses of the people as part of a great task of self-directed national transformation. The best-trained Africans are losing their capacity to communicate with the rest of the people in a language which they can understand, and they are not contributing to the needed development of the local languages. He says:

Clearly, if we are to counteract the problems of newness and unfamiliarity concerning the arrangements of our state, we must intensify the volume of direct communication between our leading minds and the rest of the community. And in legal matters such as the constitutional documents, this consideration must enable us to adopt a simpler and more direct drafting style in English and also to use our own languages. This is an unavoidable element in the challenges that confront us. Our social contract obliges us like the Swiss to make the knowledge and use of many languages a virtue. The colonial gift of the English language is an inestimable boon that we must treasure. It places us into direct communication with the

⁵⁶ Armah Ayi Kwei, *The Beautiful Ones are not yet Born*, p. 28.

⁵⁷ Achebe Chinua, *No Longer at Ease*, p. 49.

rest of the world and to some extent with each other. But this provides no excuse for failing to use and develop the necessary channels of domestic communication.⁵⁸

Africans are increasingly protesting against the use of foreign languages at meetings or private discussions unless it is very necessary. The general feeling, as Awosika expresses it, is that on the African forum and in world assemblies, Africans from independent countries are still addressed according to which Imperial country it was that once ruled them. This does not do credit to the solidarity that should exist among the representatives of the continent. It only serves to perpetuate the Imperial lines that had rigidly divided them.⁵⁹

We now turn to names and how they function positively or negatively in individual and group identities. The editor of *Afrika must Unite* explains as follows concerning names:

The mind transplant had been most successful as an operation on the blacks. Countless millions do not even know their own names, Arab and Christians — thereby cutting the essential link in the chain leading back to their roots and dignity as a people. Having lost the honour of full manhood... the black man's mind generally operates favourably toward his white enemies...⁶⁰

Generally speaking Africans value their names. A traditional African name is a religious mark of personal and human identification. It is a symbol of honour and respect for the physical environment in which the human experience flourishes positively or negatively. The community uses names as an instrument to build and mould the character of the younger, to fortify that of the adult, and to reward that of the elder. Through the name an individual is linked up with the ancestors and the spirit world. In this way an African name is a human form of identification that puts one in the uninterrupted continuity with his past and his gods. Agunwa explains what the difference is between an ordinary name and a salutation name:

Was that the man's salutation name? Every grown-up person had this, apart from his other names. There was the name signifying the day of the week when the one was born. For example 'Okeke' means that the male was born on an Eka day. There was also the other name given to explain the circumstances surrounding the birth. 'Onwuka' for example means 'death supervenes' and may be given by a father who had lost many children to the Almighty death. 'Nnanyelu' means 'a gift from God the Father'.

But there is, further, the merited name which is also the salutation name. Here it is said that stature does not mean maturity.

⁵⁸ Bentsi-Enchill Kwamena, *Institutional Challenges of our Time*, p. 25.

⁵⁹ Awosika V.O., *An African Meditation*, p. 123.

⁶⁰ *Afrika Must Unite*, Vol. 2, No. 14, 1972, p. 5.

Whoever claims maturity must consolidate his claim with a noble deed. When one is saluted by the name 'Ogbuefi' he must have treated the whole community to a feast of beef, by slaughtering a cow. Or when the salutation name is 'Otiaba' it means that in wrestling matches he had always thrown assailants flat on their backs.⁶¹

All African names have meanings. It appears that the early missionaries were ignorant of the fact that Africans valued and attached meaning to their names. Mrs Nwako⁶² for instance was known as Matildah by her associates, but in moments of discord her husband dipped down into her past and called her Ogonnie — mother's namesake. That was her name before she was baptized. Contrary to African tradition she considered this name heathen, loathsome and insulting. She was one of the Africans that had been influenced by the missionaries. When the old men of the village called her Mgbeke, either in ignorance of her transfiguration or as a result of their inability to pronounce the strange meaningless name, she blushed and even threatened. She insisted that she be called Miltadah and nothing else. This is the type of Christianity that was introduced in Africa, which sought a complete transfiguration of its adherents, — name and all. Nwankwo in his book, *Danda*, describes the occasion of the baptism of Danda, who was converted when he was already in his twenties. There was great excitement when the catechist asked Danda what name he wanted to be baptized with. Great importance was attached to the baptismal name. It had, as it were, come to replace the old titular praise name.

'What name would I use', said Danda, 'It is hard to know. Some people call me Danda, others Rain.'

'This is different', said the catechist. 'You must take an oibo name or the name of a saint.'

'You are talking', said Danda glancing expressively at the people around.

'Take Peter, Danda', one of them said.

'Take Michael.'

'Don't listen to them. Take John.'

'Write down whatever you like.'

'I will choose for him', the catechist told Father Royde.

'Danda, you will be Robinson.'

The choice was loudly applauded.

'Robinson Araba', the catechist recorded the name.

'Ahai', laughed Danda. 'It is sweet in the mouth. But will my mother know how to call it?'⁶³

⁶¹ Agunwa Clement, *The Strange Man*, p. 29.

⁶² Ibid., p. 16.

⁶³ Nwankwo Nkem, *Danda*, London, Heinemann, 1970, pp. 73-74.

Illiterate as Danda was, he sees the stupidity of adopting a meaningless name which is only 'sweet in the mouth' and which his mother will not be able to pronounce. Some Christians attempt forcing foreign names on their parents. In Munonye's book, *Obi*, Anna, in her religious zeal, tries to force Chiaku, her mother-in-law, no longer to call her son Nnanna, but Joseph:

Chiaku nodded sarcastically. 'I might as well call him Osofulu.'

'It's easy.'

'I know.' She paused. 'You church men answer all sorts of funny names. Nduru, Ji-Oji, Ji-Maimai. In Nade there's even one they call Ofekito. And, to make matters worse, the man is truly three times a fool.'⁶⁴

The writer's condemnation of this foolish use of foreign names, however Christian they may be, comes out well in this passage.

Even in non-religious circles some Africans have been fascinated by European names and titles. Agunwa, in a sharp cartoon, describes how Nweke Nwankwo became Mr. Nwankor. He says that for some time he did not know whether he was going to prefer 'Mr.' or 'Esquire'. After careful deliberation he decided on the former. For him it filled the mouth, it was dense and solid. He instructed his boys always to spell his name Nwankor. The 'r' at the end was not to be omitted for it made the thing look English enough. He also instructed the members of the Ndigwe Progressive Union that any letters or circulars not carrying that 'r' would be disowned by him.⁶⁵ Another incident of change of name is that related by Ralph Opara. After spending forty-eight hours in Paris, Nwankechukukere came back to Nigeria and changed her name to 'Nwa'.

To me there was a delightful crunchiness in 'Nwan-ke-chu-ku-ke-re', a crunchiness redolent of fried corn and ground nuts eaten with coconut. It was a pity to lose all that. Furthermore Nwakechukukere as a name should give the bearer a superiority complex. It is a name which literally means, 'She-who-is-made-by-God'.⁶⁶

The authors reveal that vanity is usually the motive behind the change of name. They also prefer African names to the new foreign ones. Many writers show that most parents give African names to their children and that these names are changed by the holders when they already regard themselves as either too religious or too educated to be African. In *The Interpreters*, Soyinka portrays a Western trained African doctor who, after marrying an English wife, returns home. Mrs. Faseyi, the mother, calls her new daughter-in-law 'Moni', an abbreviation of 'Monica'. She is irritated by the fact that her son calls her 'mummy' and his wife

⁶⁴ Munonye John, *Obi*, London, Heinemann, 1969, p. 36.

⁶⁵ Agunwa Clement, *More than Once*, p. 153.

⁶⁶ Opara Ralph, *Africa in Prose*, p. 347.

'darling'. When Bandele says that Ayo should not be blamed for his childhood habit, she protests:

'Childhood? But he didn't as a child. No, that mummy habit he picked up in England. And what annoys me is that he does it only in front of people. Why? You tell me why?'⁶⁷

Two things are clear. Firstly, this 'darling' and 'mummy' habit is as foreign as the names are to Africa; secondly the motive is to show off and to uphold foreign values. In Armah's book when Estella says that her daughter's name is 'Princess', the 'man' tries to find out whether 'Princess' is a real name or some sort of nickname. Estella, with a supercilious look, says her daughter's real name is 'Princess'.⁶⁸ This is the same 'man', who, taking a look at the old colonial residences now occupied by the new elite in power and by expatriates remarks:

... Not everything was entirely the same, though. Here and there the names had changed. True, there were very few black names of black men, but the plates by the roadside had enough names of black men with white souls and names trying mightily to be white. In the forest of white men's names, there were the signs that said almost aloud: here lives a black imitator. MILLS-HAYFORD... PLANGE-BANNERMAN... ATTOH-WHITE ... KUNTU-BLANKSON. Others that must have been keeping the white neighbours laughing even harder in their homes. ACROMOND... What Ghanaian name could that have been in the beginning, before its Civil Servant owner rushed to civilize it, giving it something like the sound of a master name? GRANTSON ... more and more incredible they were getting. There was someone calling himself FENTENGSON in this wide world, and also a man called BINFUL.⁶⁹

Armah with his biting contempt for the 'black imitators' shows to what ridiculous lengths colonial patterns of thought can go. These names have no positive thrust to the African culture. These names glorify European culture. What the editor of *Afrika must Unite* finds irritating is that even the names of some of Africa's greatest thinkers, writers, sportsmen and cultural heroes are caught up in this trap of post-colonialism: celebrities such as Professor Willie Abrahams of Ghana, Peter Abrahams of Azania, Robert Gardiner, a Ghanaian who heads the U.N.'s Economic Commission for Africa, Houphouet-Boigny (originally spelled as UFWE BWANYI), Joseph Mobutu, Sekou Toure (SEKUTURE), Julius Nyerere, Kenneth Kaunda, Patrice Lumumba and so on.

Also in Afrikan names that are originally spelled with a 'Kw' Europeans substituted the 'kw' with 'q'. In Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) a

⁶⁷ Soyinka Wole, *The Interpreters*, p. 213.

⁶⁸ Armah Ayi Kwei, *The Beautiful Ones are not yet Born*, pp. 174-175.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 147.

town originally known as Kwe-Kwe becomes Que-Que; while in Ghana, Dankwa becomes Danquah. In coastal Mozambique (Munoputapa) a town known as Kwelimane becomes Quelimane. In Angola the Kunene River becomes Cunene. Ever wondered why this situation is so bizarre as it is? For us who are seriously involved in the total political liberation of Afrika and Afrikans, the process of total cultural and national reclamation of everything that is Afrikan becomes a priority psychologically. As we daily reject those customs, names, mannerisms and norms imposed on us by the European, and thereby used everyday to define our souls, the process of getting our 'righteous' names and the proper definition and recognition of our identity becomes a focus of that struggle. As we daily negate European culture and capitalism as a force that governs our lives, we dialectically re-nourish our appetite for translucent values by taking that which most speaks to our identity as a people.⁷⁰

Over and over again the idea of it being impossible for the confused people who are proud of their slave names to get complete independence is reiterated. Through the restructuring of names and surnames communal identity will be strengthened, and this will facilitate the reclamation of African identity and culture at all levels.

Since independence many countries, such as Ghana, Mali, Malawi, Zambia, Lesotho, Botswana, Kinshasa and Namibia have had their colonial names changed. In most countries, institutions, cities and streets have been renamed. Even at the individual level, many a John has become a Kofi. All this is being done to keep up with the aspirations of the new era which seeks to re-establish African languages and identities.

5. *Food and Eating Habits*

Africans believe that food has to be shared, for a good harvest is a gift from the earth goddess and the ancestral spirits. All over Africa there were harvest festivals which marked the beginning of the season of plenty- the new year. Communal meals were served at the New Yam festivals, for instance, in much the same way as the Christian Holy Communion, in gratitude to the Almighty.

Just as it is improper not to give food to a stranger who calls at the house, it is also impolite for anyone to turn down an offer of food. There are, however, eating habits that have to be observed. It is polite to leave something on the plate, however hungry one may be. Munonye shows how the European way of serving food is unacceptable sometimes in African circles. Anna brought in to the men a big basin filled with rice, with sizeable pieces of meat spread on top. Promptly two people came forward and began to pick the pieces, with both care and respect, into an empty plate. The rest of the men wondered just where Anna

⁷⁰ *Afrika must Unite*, pp. 6-7.

got the idea of cutting the meat up into nearly equal shares, without any regard for seniority.

'It's the way it's done in civilized places', Willie said...

'What does he mean?' asked several voices together.

'In white man's country', he tried to explain.

'So the white man is now your friend?'

'All right, Joe, tell her to serve them the whole animal uncut next time', he snapped.⁷¹

Anna's serving was not completely Western since she had provided for them to eat with their hands from one basin. She should have brought in not the whole beast but a portion of the beast allocated to the men uncut. The cutting would have to be done by a senior man in the group or a junior appointed by the senior man. On another occasion when Anna was serving the women, she brought in a pot of yam stewed with fish and a basin of rice. Then she brought another basin, containing a waist of a goat. The women were excited and said that their brother was a very wise man, for in spite of his spending many years abroad he still recognized the customs of the land. He still remembered that the waist of an animal was for the daughters of the family. This meat would be divided up and each woman would take a piece of meat home for her husband or her husband's father.

The first generation of the African elite tried to discard African food and eating habits in the name of civilization. Some members of the young elite deliberately eat African food and identify generally with their people. Achebe has this to say:

'Do they serve Nigerian food here?'

Joseph was surprised at the question. No decent restaurant served Nigerian food. 'Do you want Nigerian food?'

'Of course. I have been dying to eat pounded yams and bitter leaf soup. In England we made do with semolina, but it isn't the same thing.'

'I must ask my boy to prepare you pounded yams tomorrow afternoon.'

'Good man!' said Obi, brightening up considerably. Then he added in English for the benefit of the European group that sat at the next table: 'I am sick of boiled potatoes.' By calling them boiled he hoped he had put into it all the disgust he felt.⁷²

The young Africans want the Europeans to know that they do not despise African dishes. Later on Achebe adds that Christopher and Obi were eating pounded yams and egusi soup with their fingers for the good reason that it tasted better that way and also for the even better reason that they were not scared, as the first generation was,

⁷¹ Munonye John, *Obi*, pp. 71-72.

⁷² Achebe Chinua, *No Longer at Ease*, p. 34.

of being called uncivilized.⁷³ Amos Tutuola in his narrative of his experiences in the bush of ghosts says that when he got to a place where there was an international kitchen where different dishes were being prepared, he also smelt African food.

... But I thought in my mind to go direct to the room from which the smell of the African food was rushing out to me, as I prefer my native food most.⁷⁴

Perhaps Tutuola is reminding the so-called international restaurants that they are not as international as the one in the bush of ghosts. If the first generation of educated Africans had not despised their own food, maybe there would be as many African restaurants as there are Chinese ones all over the world.

In Henshaw's *Dinner for Promotion*, when Toru gets upset because her cooking doesn't come off well when the guests are already waiting in the house, her brother says:

'Don't cry, Ruru. It's my own fault. I shouldn't have invited these big people here.' (He himself is suppressing a sob.) 'If they ate kenke or garri or even semolina, I should have known what to do. But to cook all this fancy stuff! Please just try your best.'⁷⁵

The real trouble has been that 'big people' eat 'big food' and 'big food' is foreign food — the food of the white masters.

The so-called big men, however, have been more a victim of foreign drinks than anything else. Armah has a fine way of explaining why poor people will spend the little money they have on expensive foreign drinks in order to entertain their big friends. Armah's 'man'⁷⁶ found it impossible to find any of the really expensive drinks his wife would have wanted, like the British White Horse whisky and Vat 69, to feed Mr. Koomson and his wife. She always wanted these drinks when there was an important person to be entertained. Once she had told him why, and her reason was that any ruffian could buy and drink beer. She did not like made-in-Ghana spirits. She preferred those foreign drinks which usually have to be smuggled into the country or bought at the border with foreign currency which has fallen into the hands of private citizens. The consequence of this use of foreign currency by private citizens weakens the already depleted foreign currency reserves of the country. What is worse is that the big shots and 'Party socialists' enjoy foreign drinks at the expense of the poor. At the dinner for the Koomsons, the 'man's' wife served beer. Estella, Koomson's wife, com-

⁷³ Ibid., p. 21.

⁷⁴ Tutuola Amos, *My Life in the Bush of Ghosts*, pp. 23-24.

⁷⁵ Henshaw James Ene, *Dinner for Promotion*, University of London Press, 1967, p. 79.

⁷⁶ Armah Ayi Kwei, *The Beautiful Ones are not yet Born*, pp. 133-134.

plained that her hosts should not have wasted money on local beer for it did not agree with her constitution.

'Really, the only good drinks are European drinks. These make you ill.'

'As for me', said the man, raising his mug, 'they do not make me ill. Perhaps in the pocket, but nowhere else.'

'You should have bought European drinks', Estella pressed on, 'and not have wasted your money like this...'

... Even Estella eventually reconciled herself to being an African and drank the beer with a sour face.⁷⁷

Estella was exceptionally rude to her poor hosts. This kind of rudeness has come to be accepted if it comes from the masters, be they black or white. Estella, like many people of her kind, has not reconciled herself to being an African. As a contrast to this European oriented taste for drinks, Soyinka gives a description of Monica, Faseyi's English wife who would not drink anything else but palm wine. At a party she turned down an offer of champagne and asked for palm wine. The reaction of her mentally white husband is very interesting:

'She had to go and ask for palm wine at a cocktail reception. Have you ever heard such a thing? For palm wine!... If she were a bush-girl from some London slum I could understand. But she is educated. She has moved in society. Why does she have to come and disgrace me by drinking palm wine?'⁷⁸

Soyinka's irony comes out sharply here. Faseyi thinks that there might be something wrong with his wife's education and taste and does not realize that there is something wrong with his values. He is one of those Africans who despise everything African. In a way this attitude of his explains why he married an English wife.

The younger elite and their attitudes to drinks have been well represented by Agunwa's Mr. H. Obi, who also has had his higher education in England just like Faseyi. On the occasion Mr. H. Obi visited Nwankor, an interesting debate on European versus African drinks took place:

These doubts were fleeting through his mind when the august visitor pulled an old kitchen stool, sat on it, and asked for a glass of tombo wine.

'Do you still drink that?' shouted Mr. Nwankor in great surprise. 'Why not?'

'Ordinary palm wine.'

'Yes, and it is very good indeed.'

'Don't you prefer beer or whisky? That's what big men drink.'

⁷⁷ Ibid., pp. 154-155.

⁷⁸ Soyinka Wole, *The Interpreters*, pp. 42-43.

'It all depends on what you call big men.'

'Do you drink palm wine because you learnt Economic, because it is cheaper?'

'O.K. What is beer and what is palm wine? Beer is clean, yes, and it is bottled so that it is handy. But is it anything more than running a small river through a few ingredients and bottling the coloured liquid? Palm wine is a vegetable product, is sweeter, and gives you yeast.'

'What does beer give you?'

'A large tummy and plenty of urine.'

They both joined in a hearty laugh.

'And what does whisky give you?'

'Just a headache.'

'Why do people drink them?'

'Because they like them and I just don't.'⁷⁹

This simple elementary lesson given to Nwankor could also have been given to Faseyi and to those people of whom he is representative.

In *People of the City*, Ekwensi describes the African-made illicit gin which is distilled without licence. The irony of it is that the brewers call it O.H.M.S. in honour of the Queen of England. They break the colonial law to honour the Queen. He explains that even though this liquor does not mature like genuine distillers, anyone who is not prejudiced would not be able to distinguish the taste from that of pure gin.⁸⁰ What most of the writers are doing is to break the prejudice that people have against their local drinks. These prejudices are colonial remnants.

Nwankwo in his book, *Danda*, shows how the European toasts are meaningless to most Africans. After Ndulue had got his guests to stand up and repeat 'cheers', with their glasses held aloft, Danda felt that the ritual had not been performed in the right way. He, therefore, said as people were about to sit down:

'Wait, people of our land. Let us do this thing as it is done.' They were puzzled but remained standing. Danda turned to Ndulue and said: 'Let's have one more drink. If we are to have wine we may as well have enough to fill our mouths.' 'True word,' said the trader measuring out some drops of brandy. 'That's how it is,' said Danda raising his glass. 'When a man brings oji we must pray to his ofo. We must thank you, Ndulue. We pray that from where you got this oji there will be more of it for you. A hundred more. Let us pray to Chineka Olisaebuluwa who made all things. Chineke, come down from the sky and eat oji. Spirit of the dead, come and eat oji.' Danda tipped some liquid on the floor...

⁷⁹ Agunwa Clement, *More than Once*, pp. 201-202.

⁸⁰ Ekwensi Cyprian, *People of the City*, pp. 117-118.

Ndulue had waited with some impatience for the end of the story.⁸¹ More and more Africans feel entitled to do things their own way despite the impatience of the 'Ndulues' who repeat 'cheers' which are meaningless to them. This goes for many eating and drinking habits. To the African, as long as there is health, one can at least face hunger positively. What-ever is eaten has to be shared with God and the spirits.

As the meeting of the Ndigwe Patriotic Union⁸² adjourned for a drink, each man dipped his glass into a bucket of water for the purpose of washing it before filling it with wine. Mr. Nwadiaka, however, refused to wash the glass before drinking. Asked why he refused to obey this rule of hygiene, he explained that they were trying to make Bekee⁸³ more than the white man. He asked if their fathers had not kept alive after drinking from one cup. He went on to say:

'All right, what of the white men who taught you to wash everything touched by somebody else's lips, do they not kiss? Which is better, to suck the saliva of a woman or to share the same cup with fellow men? Does the white man wash the lips of his wife before sucking it? Do you not see what they do at the cinema?'

There was an uproar of laughter while he concluded: 'It is what you believe that can kill you. Pour me a glass of wine and let me get that tuberculosis'... Others murmured that he had a point, that this established communion of drinking from the same cup should not be thrown away in the name of hygiene.⁸⁴

This is a practical demonstration of Africans rejecting somewhat useful foreign cultural values for they see the exponents of the same culture having more unhygienic habits. Communal identity, symbolized by the established communion of drinking, is considered more important than kissing which is more unhygienic.

6. *Music and Games*

In spite of the fact that many Europeans spoke well of the ability of Africans to sing, educated Africans believed that their traditional music was primitive. In *Danda*, Nwankwo reveals the general attitude of the old country people towards European music. As people came to welcome him home from work, Onuma played an American crooner on the gramophone. The men listened for a few moments and complained that what they had heard did not sound right. Nwafo Ugo, a drummer, had a keen ear for what properly constituted harmony. Sceptical of the music he had heard he asked:

⁸¹ Nwankwo Nkem, *Danda*, pp. 12-13.

⁸² Agunwa Clement, *More than Once*, p. 13.

⁸³ Bekee (Baikie) is a word for a white man. William was an early explorer in Nigeria.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.

'What do you call this, son of ours?' he asked, making a face.
'Is it music or what?'
'It is oibo music. You don't like it?'
'Who would?'

Onuma removed the disc and substituted for it a recording of an Ibo song and in a few moments the vigorous notes of the ogwulegwu cracked out. The faces of the men cleared, their eyes brightened, they moved their limbs in time with the music. 'Ahai!' cried Nwafo. 'There is no doubt about this at all. This is music (egwu).'⁸⁵

These men find European music not appealing but they respond to the rhythm of their own music. Nwankwo's aim is to show that African music is as good as any other type of music and it is worth appreciating.

De Graft makes a young educated lady defy her father when she chooses dancing as her career. She explains that when she talks of dancing she does not mean the stupid shuffling under dim lights that they call ballroom dancing. She is interested in traditional Ghanaian dances, dance drama with masks and drumming.⁸⁶ To confirm that some young Africans choose African dancing as a career, we interviewed students who do post-graduate work at the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana. These musicians say that they find satisfaction and fulfilment in African music and dancing which they do as professionals. This is one of the most popular departments at this University.

In Henshaw's *This is our Chance*, Chief Damba complains that the teacher he has engaged to teach his daughter causes trouble in the community. This teacher scorns the traditional way of dancing, where men and women dance round in circles or lines, and introduces a most shocking idea which he calls ballroom dancing. His only reason is that it is done in white-men's countries.⁸⁷ The suggestion made by Chief Damba is that ballroom dancing is immoral and so it is not good for his people. To the teacher, of course, ballroom dancing's merit is that it is European.

In Djoletto's *The Strange Man*, two brothers argue about the activities of their children at school. The one complains that the African-run schools have teachers who dance and who, therefore, must be seducers of women. The other one argues as follows:

'My daughter has been learning how to dance at Achimota. Whether authorities there know about it or not I can't tell. What she is fond of is European, not African dance. I don't know of any dance of this country in which the man has to embrace the woman firmly and closely to his body. If it comes to seduction, then according to

⁸⁵ Nwankwo Nkem, *Danda*, p. 103.

⁸⁶ De Graft J.C., *Sons and Daughters*, pp. 18-19.

⁸⁷ Henshaw James Ene, *This is our Chance*, p. 26.

your argument, it's these very recently European-dominated schools which you rate so highly which have been spreading the evil.⁸⁸

From the above argument it is clear that African parents prefer African to European dancing which they regard as evil and conducive to seduction. They would even encourage their own music and dancing to be taught at school.

Sutherland's musician, Senchi, compares singing other people's songs to wearing other people's clothes. He says neither of the two suits him.

Senchi (earnestly): 'You see, it's like this. My own suit may be shabby, but its shabbiness is of my own making. I understand it. It is a guide to self-evaluation. When I stand in it, I know where I stand and why. And that, strangely, means to me dignity and security.'⁸⁹

Even if African music may be said to be not as developed as works by European artists, Africans are advised to study and develop it, for it is in that way that they can be proud of their own. Senchi makes this statement as he entertains people at Edufa's party dressed in Edufa's suit. He accepts that he is an ass or he would be wearing his own suit. The implication is that Africans should accept that they are stupid if they continue wearing other people's suits.

In *The Ivory Dancer*⁹⁰ Ekwensi's beautiful lady, Akunma, breaks down when she finds herself torn between her boy-friend and the Chief. Akunma is the best dancer of the village. The Chief has asked her to lead a dancing team on behalf of the village to entertain important guests. Akunma, however, has been forbidden by Peters, her boy-friend from college, to do African dance. In such a crisis Akunma wonders what she should do. Nobody wants her as a wife in the village since she is educated. On the other hand her decent man, Peters, does not want her to do African dance.

Sutherland's Senchi suggests that they should play some games at the party. He objects to playing 'Musical chairs', as that is a colonial game. He asks people to suggest African games.⁹¹ The Africans have discarded their games in favour of European ones. Agunwa describes how a coconut throwing game was played. Every participant brought one coconut. When these were collected, a pit was dug to a depth of about one foot. Then part of the sand was put back, making the hole soft-bedded. Against this loose bed one of the coconuts was thrown in turns. Whoever broke it, took the broken coconut. The ground was loosened and the game repeated for the next coconut until all were done. A coconut is broken when the milk inside it flows out. But

⁸⁸ Djoletto Amu, *The Strange Man*, p. 231.

⁸⁹ Sutherland Efua T., *Edufa*, London, Longmans, 1967, p. 39.

⁹⁰ Ekwensi Cyprian, *The Ivory Dancer* (Lokotown), p. 57.

⁹¹ Sutherland Efua T., *Edufa*, p. 46.

should the shell merely crack, whoever threw it is expected to press the nut between his two palms until the milk flows. Should he fail to achieve this — which at times happens with hard-shelled nuts, it becomes obvious that the next thrower should win the game. The author then remarks that whoever wins this game should be no less proud than a winner of several thousand pounds in a football pool.⁹² What Agunwa means is that coconut throwing and other African games offer as much exercise and moral satisfaction as football, tennis and others.

The above discussion is proof that in music, dancing and games some Africans now want to exploit their own resources first before being attracted to foreign arts.

7. Moral Values

In this section we come face to face with the stereotypes that Africans have of themselves and of Europeans. A few positive in-group attributes such as honesty, politeness, friendliness and bravery, will be reflected in the texts. As Table VIII-1 of the Klineberg and Zavalloni study shows, there are many common negative attributes ascribed to Europeans by Africans. These include racism, hypocrisy, cunning, dishonesty, materialism, hatred for Africans, pride and a feeling of superiority towards Africans. In our analysis the texts will provide examples which substantiate the existence of these negative stereotypes. In some cases these statements will justify the negative 'images' which have resulted from experiences that Africans have had with Europeans.

In *The Voice*, Okara describes how Okolo, in his exile, met a white official in a strange town. After Okolo had told the white man that he was looking for 'it' — the truth, the white man said:

'I see, you are one of those smart alects . . . You wait until we move out and see what will happen to men like you.'⁹³

After saying this, he then moved round and walked to the window. As he looked outside he started singing what Okara calls 'the song with no words, no tune, tapping the floor with his shoe'. As the white man returned from the window he said:

'What I have said is off the record', he said with a smile smile in his mouth. 'You forget what I said about what will happen to you when we move out of your country. You forget everything and I will make things easy for you.'

The phrases 'smile smile in his mouth' and 'song with no words, no tune' are suggestive of the hollowness of the white man. When Okolo realized that this man was dishonest, he asked:

'You don't believe in truth and honesty, then?'

'Look, my lad, these things simply don't exist in real life, if you

⁹² Agunwa Clement, *More than Once*, p. 73.

⁹³ Okara Gabriel, *The Voice*, London, Heinemann, 1970, p. 87.

want to get anywhere, if you want to make good. But mind you, I am not saying I do not believe in them. All I am saying is, you have to be judicious.⁹⁴

Okara has made this white official declare that he is dishonest and untruthful in the execution of his duties and in his relations with other people.

Djoleto goes further to say the European-oriented education inculcates in the youth untruthfulness. Through his character, an old untrained teacher, he explains to the new boy at school that truthfulness does not pay. The boy had been punished in the morning by the headmaster because he had been truthful. As the old teacher explains, the boy got into trouble for saying what he felt he should say, and not what he was expected to say. Western morality demands, he says to the boy, that when someone says 'Good morning' to him and he thinks it's a bad morning, he shouldn't say 'Bad morning'. He would be considered lunatic. The teacher says this is how trouble starts until they have injustice paraded as justice.⁹⁵ Djoleto cites the example of Mensa who was considered a strange man for being truthful:

Mensa's natural honesty was not to be tolerated; it was not to be fostered; he needed training to get rid of it otherwise, in future, he would embarrass organized society and organized society must survive not on occasional honesty but on endemic lying.⁹⁶

The implication here is that lying and dishonesty are built into the Western system and that they are essentials for the survival of organized society. In the same strain Mr. Roberts⁹⁷ is portrayed as a liar who holds high office as a court clerk. His identity is a mystery to everybody except the partially secret official documents. His great grand-father is traced as an Englishman. His unfaithfulness is deliberately linked up with his English background.

Aluko makes an old man query the fact that two educated Africans, who read the same book, cannot agree. He wonders why they should read different things from the same books, for in this way they confuse the chiefs who cannot read. From this the old man concludes: 'The world is now a spoilt world.'⁹⁸ In another of Aluko's books, Chief Lotum directly blames the white man for spoiling the world — at least his world:

Chief Lotum said, smiling sympathetically, commanding in a way all his own the audience of all: 'Not your fault, Teacher. The white man has come to change the world for worse.'⁹⁹

⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 88.

⁹⁵ Djoleto Amu, *The Strange Man*, p. 11.

⁹⁶ Ibid., pp. 93-94.

⁹⁷ Ibid., pp. 208-209.

⁹⁸ Aluko T.M., *One Man, One Matchet*, pp. 150-151.

⁹⁹ Aluko T.M., *One Man, One Wife*, p. 139.

It is not by mistake that the teacher should be found an instrument of European deceitfulness. Soyinka's character, Salubi, in his play *The Road*, says:

'All I need now is a licence. It is only a matter of getting Professor to forge one for me.'¹⁰⁰

De Graft's character in *Sons and Daughters* says:

'So this is friendship for you. Tchah! Put so much confidence in a man — a well-educated man and a lawyer to boot — and this is what he does to me...'

To which Annah adds with finality:

'It would seem that going to school or college does not necessarily make a man an honest friend. But you should have known this, with all your experience.'¹⁰¹

These are examples of dishonesty by educated Africans which in a wider context is associated with the Western moral standards.

Another negative attribute assigned to Europeans is that of hypocrisy. As an example of this, Chinua Achebe in *No Longer at Ease*, describes Obi's journey by boat from England to Nigeria. Obi met a very friendly bald-headed customs officer. The customs officer began asking Obi whether he had had a happy stay in England whilst attending university. He also remarked that Obi must have found the weather very cold. In reply Obi said that he didn't mind the weather very much in the end. He said this because he had learnt that an Englishman might grumble about his weather but did not expect a foreigner to join in.¹⁰² Later on Obi thought of telling his father that he no longer believed in his God. He was reminded of similar thoughts which had come to him in London a few weeks ago to shout to the smooth M.P. lecturing to African students on the Central African Federation: 'Go away, you are all bloody hypocrites!' He then adds that: 'It was not quite the same thing, though. His father believed fervently in God; the smooth M.P. was just a bloody hypocrite.'¹⁰³

Sometimes this hypocrisy is taken for diplomacy. In any case Africans dismiss both the Englishman's diplomacy and hypocrisy as wicked. In *The Interpreters*, Chief Winsala expects his bribe from Sagoe, an applicant who has just returned from studies in England:

'The Englishman has not left much of his diplomacy on you. You are more like American, straightforward. That is how I am too. You know, I like the American, they are not like the English, too much cunny for Englishman, so so diplomacy but they are much more so wicked even when they are saying Yes please and No thank.

¹⁰⁰ Soyinka Wole, *The Road*, p. 4.

¹⁰¹ De Graft, J.C., *Sons and Daughters*, p. 45.

¹⁰² Achebe Chinua, *No Longer at Ease*, pp. 22-23.

¹⁰³ Ibid., pp. 56-57.

you ha ha ha ha ha. I like straightforward men, that is how I am made.'¹⁰⁴

Africans regard themselves as being more hospitable than Europeans. In *One Man, One Matchet*, the African District Officer wanted to call on the vicar of the church. It occurred to him that he had not made an appointment. He, however, remembered that he was in Africa, his own Africa, not England. Whilst an Englishman would not make an official call in England without a previous appointment, in Africa the doors of the house of a citizen are open to a fellow citizen at any time of the day. He told himself that the hospitality of the house of a true African is open to anyone, native or stranger, at any time of the day, and so he drove straight to the vicar's house where he was well received and entertained.¹⁰⁵ Achebe also discusses the decline of the wedding feasts in the towns since the invention of invitation cards.¹⁰⁶ Many Africans find it hard to believe that a man cannot go to his neighbour's wedding unless given one of these papers on which they write R.S.V.P. This demonstrates what limits there are to European hospitality. Africans extend their hospitality even to an enemy. In spite of the fact that Obi wronged the Progressive Union, he got help from them when he was in trouble. The union decided to pay for the services of a lawyer from their funds on behalf of Obi, for they held that anger against a fellow man should be felt in the flesh, not in the bone.

Henshaw stresses the fact that African children are taught to respect elderly men. He says that the African traditional love and respect for the elderly people have been thrown away in favour of out-group values. It becomes evident that lack of respect is attributed to Europeans. Serinya says:

'My dear, many men are called "gentle" not because they are really gentle, but because they have money.'¹⁰⁷

Serinya has come back with these ideas from her recent tour of Europe. It is held that young people do not respect their seniors because they profess to be copying their teachers, the Europeans. Rudeness is regarded as a European characteristic.

There is no doubt that many Africans regard Europeans as racists. Almost all the Africans who have written about the relations between Europe and Africa, mention the fact that whites are racists. Even though this is a subjective issue, it is clear that the image of whites as racists that Africans have can be traced to the relations during the colonial era.

Djoleto explains how white racism is passed from generation to generation. He cites the example of a white magistrate in Africa, with

¹⁰⁴ Soyinka Wole, *The Interpreters*, p. 84.

¹⁰⁵ Aluko T.M., *One Man, One Matchet*, p. 27.

¹⁰⁶ Achebe Chinua, *No Longer at Ease*, p. 10.

¹⁰⁷ Henshaw James Ene, *A Man of Character*, pp. 61-62.

Winchester, Oxford and Lincoln's Inn behind him, falling under the racist influence of an old drunken Briton who was an army sergeant, recruited from Stepney in London. The sergeant advised the magistrate as follows:

'Never smile with a bloody native. They bloody well play up to you if you bloody do that. If they bring a bloody native from a bloody gold-mine charged with hiding a bloody gold nugget in his dirty arse-hole, jail him. Jail the bastard, I says!'¹⁰⁸

After receiving this piece of advice, the magistrate would be seen bending over the evidence-recording book, pretending to be writing something in order to give himself a laugh secretly.

Armah traces white racism to the hatred that some whites have for the black skin. He tells of how whites who live in luxury in Africa seclude themselves from the suffering Africans. The poor find these whites unreachable because they keep huge dogs that eat more meat in a single day than a human Ghanaian family gets in a month:

'... dogs which could obey their masters' voices like soldiers at war, and had as little love for black skins as their white masters.'¹⁰⁹

Armah cannot be blamed for lacking a sense of humour when he says that the whites pass on their racism even to their pet animals.

In Aluko's book, *Kinsman and Foreman*,¹¹⁰ Titus refrains from discussing the vexed subject of colour-bar in Britain with his English Director who was finding out whether or not Englishmen were kind to Titus when he was in Britain. Titus confesses that some Englishmen were very good to him and that a good number were bad, very bad. But the vast majority, he says, were completely unmindful of his existence and showed not the slightest interest in him and his affairs. Racism is not only confined to the Black-White relations in Africa, it is practised in Britain as well. In his famous 'Telephone Conversation', Soyinka tells of how an African has to say how black he is to a landlord in Britain, before being accepted as a tenant. In *The Interpreters*, Soyinka comments on white racist morality. In a conversation between Egbo and a female student this is what we gather:

The girl was asking him, 'What do you do?'

'Foreign Office. And they only employ men of sterling character.'

'And what is sterling character?'

'Well, that is a little complicated, but it boils down to this — you may spend your nights in a brothel so long as it is indigenous, but you may not speak to the daughter of a foreign ambassador.'¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸ Djoletto Amu, *The Strange Man*, p. 211.

¹⁰⁹ Armah Ayi Kwei, *The Beautiful Ones are not yet Born*, pp. 77-78.

¹¹⁰ Aluko T.M., *Kinsman and Foreman*, p. 12.

¹¹¹ Soyinka Wole, *The Interpreters*, pp. 130-131.

Our interpretation of this passage is in agreement with Klineberg and Zavalloni's findings that African racism, if there is any, is less virulent than the white variety.

White racism is tied up with a feeling of superiority towards Africans. Mr. Green in Achebe's *No Longer at Ease*, is one of the many examples of whites who believe that they are superior to Africans and that they have a God-given duty towards the black man. As an excuse for interfering in Obi's private life, he says:

'It is, of course, none of my business really. But in a country where even the educated have not reached the level of thinking about tomorrow, one has a clear duty.' He made the word 'educated' taste like vomit. Obi thanked him for his advice.¹¹²

Mr. Green believes in an evolutionist theory that Africans must be protected and led by their white demigods to a high level of development. Mr. Green is not different from Mr. Jones, a school inspector who orders the headmaster, Mr. Nduka, to shut up, as he tries to explain something. Mr. Nduka throws Mr. Jones flat on the ground and the whole school is upset. Achebe's comment on this is:

Without knowing why, teachers and pupils all took to their heels. To throw a white man was like unmasking an ancestral spirit.¹¹³

The feeling of superiority that Europeans have was encouraged by the fact that Africans accepted it. Whites were, in a way, given as much respect as is given to ancestral spirits. The Africans particularly respected the white man's technology:

'If you see a white man, take off your hat for him. The only thing he cannot do is mould a human being.'¹¹⁴

This attitude, which came from genuine respect, encouraged feelings of white superiority and racism. Achebe points out, however, that this was true of the Africans' attitude to whites twenty years ago. The Greens and Jones are no longer allowed a free run in some independent states.

Africans regard themselves as brave people. Men dread being found cowards. They believe that their fathers from the grave would disown them if they are cowards. There are many rituals that the youth have to go through before they are recognized as fully fledged members of society. Amongst the Igbo, for instance, the operation of the *ici* ritual is excruciating, but the victim has to bear the pain if not with a smile at least without any visible show of sorrow. If he winces or cries out, he

¹¹² Achebe Chinua, *No Longer at Ease*, p. 95.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 64-65.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

breaks the magic of the ritual and lets down himself and his kindred.¹¹⁵ In *Dinner for Promotion*, for instance, Sharia tests her lover:

Sharia: 'Then kiss my feet.'

Tikku: 'I will not kiss your feet.'

Sharia: 'Good. I like a man who is manly. All this business of "ladies first" is so contrary to nature's way. To respect my parents and to be strong, those are two best qualities I like in men. And Tikk-Tokk, dear, you've got them both.'¹¹⁶

Some ladies like their men looking manly. They would sacrifice an out-group value of 'ladies first' for the sake of having their men pose as strong. In Sutherland's *Edufa*, Kankam, the old man, gives his son his final advice:

Kankam: 'Sit down, son, sit. What do I want, you say?' (Very deliberately) 'I want the courage that makes responsible men. I want truthfulness. Decency. Feeling for your fellow men. These are the things I have always wanted. Have you got them to give?...' (Edufa rises angry) 'I fear not, since you have sold such treasures to buy yourself the importance that fools admire.'¹¹⁷

The old man has enumerated the in-group values some Africans want to cultivate. In their scale of values, courage, truthfulness, decency, and a feeling for fellow-men, take precedence.

In a violent situation, Africans believe in acting as brave and courageous men. In *The Interpreters*, when Sagoe threatens to strike Joe Golder, an American, he says: 'God, you Americans are so damned insufferable it's a wonder you get out of anywhere alive.' Golder recoils and says: 'I hate violence. Any form of violence upsets me.' To this Sagoe replies: 'Then you should be more careful. There is violence in words too.'¹¹⁸ Violence in words is a game for women, which is more hurting to African men than physical violence.

Some Europeans are thought of as being unfriendly. Joe Golder admits that he is unfriendly:

'You know I am a misanthrope. I do not like human beings. I like to be alone, what is wrong with that... my moods change. Sometimes I am a perfect host. And then I come in one afternoon and ask the man to pack up his bags.'¹¹⁹

This kind of behaviour would be unheard of in traditional African society.

¹¹⁵ Nwankwo Nkem, *Danda*, p. 194.

¹¹⁶ Henshaw, James Ene, *Dinner for Promotion*, p. 44.

¹¹⁷ Sutherland Efua T., *Edufa*, p. 13.

¹¹⁸ Soyinka Wole, *The Interpreters*, p. 194.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 184-185.

In *Kinsman and Foreman*, Aluko portrays the Americans as being inquisitive and highly acquisitive. He describes a situation where a foreign journalist made himself so unbearably inquisitive to a point of almost being beaten up. One girl reacted strongly to this foreigner who was scrounging for news: 'She told him to go to hell, via Soviet Russia.'¹²⁰ The suggestion is that in the mind of an average American the way to hell goes via Soviet Russia. According to this African lady an inquisitive foreigner would rather be on the way to hell than be making hell in Africa.

8. *Attitudes to Work*

A study of African society reveals that the Africans regard work as something sacred. It is with the sweat of their labour that they expect to live. To this day Africans regard themselves as industrious people. They attribute laziness to the European way of life. Flora Nwapa explains that ladies take it to be their honourable duty to serve their husbands. Idu asks her sick husband to sleep on because she is prepared to serve him:

'Yes, you can afford to sleep like white people. Will you go to the stream or do you want me to take out the water for you?'

True to African tradition the husband replies:

'Don't worry, I shall go to the stream', said Adiewere. 'I am well now. If I go back to bed, know that it is not illness anymore, but laziness.'¹²¹

The women are proud of their duties in the home and they don't want their men to come into the kitchen. One woman says: 'Men of today are so queer. You mean her husband cooked!' The other lady confirmed that the husband of a lazy wife split firewood, fetched water, cooked and took some food to his wife. They take the view that it is a shame for a woman to eat the food that has been cooked by a man.¹²² African women are used to working even when they are pregnant. Work means life to them. Idu insists that she wants to continue trading even when she is six months pregnant for she holds that she is strong:

'I am strong. How can I just stay at home not doing anything waiting for my baby to be born? No, my husband. It is the white women who do that, not we women of this town.'¹²³

The whites are despised for their physical weakness and laziness. It is quite clear that laziness of all types is attributed to whites.

¹²⁰ Aluko T.M., *Kinsman and Foreman*, p. 200.

¹²¹ Nwapa Floa, *Idu*, p. 21.

¹²² *Ibid.*, p. 197.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 204.

Armah comes out of the family situation duties to explain how in industry the whites pick lazy jobs for themselves. Kofi Billy, for example, was picked to do work that was too cruel for white men's hands. He did his work well. At the end of the day he was always very tired, but he had found some sort of happiness in his work. One day as he was moving cargo, pushing it with his giant hands across the deck, a fresh young Englishman sitting at some machine loaded too much tension into even the steel ropes on board and one of them snapped. The free rope whipped with all that power through the air and just cut Kofi Billy's right leg away beneath the knee. The Englishman said he deserved it for he had been playing at his work. Had he moved faster, he would not have been there when the steel rope snapped.¹²⁴ The African attitudes towards work are generalized from cases such as that of Kofi Billy and the lazy young Englishman.

Agunwa writes in favour of the traditional communal labour system in which villagers would work in teams or take turns in rendering service to the community. In such a work situation moral obligations are of more importance than individual monetary or material gain. For instance village cattle owners would lead their stock to the spot where they would be handed over to the herdsman of the day to tend. They would come to the same place to collect their cows, in the evening, and lead them back to their homes. Each herdsman was expected to lead the village cattle to the greenest pastures and the freshest springs. His success or failure was measured by the degree of protrusion of the stomachs of these free mowers. The punishment, in case of unsatisfactory work, was the whipping tongue of complainers.¹²⁵ It was incumbent on the man whose turn it was to tend the cattle to bring back the correct number to the cleared spot at sunset, and to make sure that none of the cattle under his charge trespassed into other people's farms. Other village jobs were done as a collective responsibility of the community. There are now some African scholars who see no reason why this typically African team work should not be put into practice in the current development schemes. It is doubtful that this system is less fruitful than the European individual remuneration system in an African situation.

9. *Attitudes to Sex, Marriage and Family Life*

Africans believe that all sexual perversities that one can imagine to exist are a negative contribution of the Europeans to African culture. All African writers attribute sexual perversion to whites and to the cities. The cities, of course, are regarded as European institutions for they conform to a European way of life.

In *The Interpreters*, Sagoe says that he was unable, while in America, to accept that three out of every five of his friends were

¹²⁴ Armah Ayi Kwei, *The Beautiful Ones are not yet Born*, pp. 76-77.

¹²⁵ Agunwa Clement, *More than Once*, pp. 72-73.

perverts, active or latent, and that the fourth was in love with his mother. He confesses:

'No. I lived with this European conspiracy to de-sex men and it drove me mad. So I simply developed a most stubbornly rooted reaction.'¹²⁶

Sagoe tells Joe Golder, an American pervert, that he has spent some time in places where every possible perversion is practised. He does not claim that there is no perversion in Africa at all; he only says that he happens to have been born in a comparatively healthy society.

Flora Nwapa discusses prostitution. Idu, her main character, says that prostitution is bad for African women:

'Our Woman of the Lake frowns at it, and that's why prostitutes of our town never profit by it...'¹²⁷

The 'Woman of the Lake' is the goddess of virginity who punishes prostitutes. Idu continues to say that prostitution is foreign to African women and that it should be left to women of other lands. Later on, she describes Abonema's prostitution, which was of the worst kind:

'And prostitution of the worst kind. She was going with white people.'

Again, prostitution of the worst kind is attributed to whites. In Chinua Achebe's short story, *Girls at War*, one of the two white Red Cross people who were attending the Lieutenant-Colonel's party during the Civil War in Nigeria just exploded and said:

'Why should a man, a decent man, throw away his life. For nothing! Charlie didn't need to die. Not for this stinking place. Yes, everything stinks here. Even the girls who come here all dolled up and smiling, what are they worth? Don't I know? A head of stock-fish, that's all, or one American dollar, and they are ready to tumble into bed.'¹²⁸

The Red Cross man was punished for saying this by one young officer who gave him a thundering slap and then shoved him outside. As this Red Cross man was getting his punishment, Nwankwo and a friend next to him were saying, very quietly, that although the man had been rude and offensive what he had said about the girls was unfortunately the bitter truth, only he was the wrong man to say it. The point is, the Red Cross man was not questioning the wrongness of prostitution. He was, it seems, speaking from experience. He may have been a customer of African prostitution. His complaint was only that the charges were

¹²⁶ Soyinka Wole, *The Interpreters*, pp. 190-200.

¹²⁷ Nwapa Flora, *Idu*, pp. 34-41.

¹²⁸ Achebe Chinua, *Girls at War*, pp. 100-111.

too low for what he was used to. This is what made the whole place stink.

Fafunwa, writing of an African's adventure in America, says the first thing an African student is told is that he should get Americanized and socialize with the girls.¹²⁹ Africans regard these perversions as an out-group value.

In *The Interpreters*, Soyinka puts these words into the mouth of Dehinwa's grandmother:

'Why are you so thin? You were plump when you first came back from ilu oyinbo.' She looked up sharply, boring into her eyes, then shook her head in relief and mischief. 'No', she chortled, 'I don't think so. But listen, girl, I know this new habit of you modern girls, don't join them in the foolishness. If you are expecting a baby, have it. A child is a beautiful thing, have it. The important thing is to know the father. We have never been ashamed of children, whatever your mother may say, and you are old enough. . . What are you waiting for anyway? Why aren't you married? No, no, don't drag me away. I just want to know. You should be married and giving me children. . .'¹³⁰

Here these three African women are all at three different points on the cultural value scale. On the one extreme is Dehinwa who has had her education in the land of the oyinbos and she obviously has adopted the oyinbos' attitude towards sex and marriage. On the other extreme is Dehinwa's grandmother who has no respect for the European way of birth control and delayed marriage. She is for marriage and children. When she says 'we have never been ashamed of children', she implies that some people are. Soyinka does not moralize on the issue of birth control or abortion. He merely advances a cultural value, that is, 'a child is a beautiful thing, have it.' The fear that Dehinwa has concerning early marriage or possessing many children comes from the education she has had which seeks to prevent population explosion, to amass wealth at the expense of having children. What does an administrator or planner do to change the belief system of the people in order to prove that the joy and pride of having children can be made compatible with the control of population growth? Is it not advisable for anyone planning for the development of a people to be mindful of the cultural values that are likely to cripple his plans?

At an international conference on the population dynamics in Ghana as late as March/April 1974, African scholars expressed strong reservations concerning artificial means of birth control. Barrington Kaye's impressionistic study of the attitude of the Ghanaians towards having children reveals that children are wanted by every married couple and

¹²⁹ Fafunwa Babs, 'An African's Adventures in America', Hughes Langston, *An African Treasury*, p. 76.

¹³⁰ Soyinka Wole, *The Interpreters*, p. 106.

that they are regarded as 'better than riches' as 'gifts from God'. In many villages it is said that to have children is the main, or even the only purpose of marriage. The advantage of having children is that to have a large family ensures high social status to the parents, and is a source of much prestige. After their first child, a couple will cease to be addressed by their own names, but will instead be referred to as 'Kofi's father' and 'Kofi's mother'. Special titles may be used to address the woman who has brought forth ten children or twins. During puberty rites in one of the prayers during the ritual the ancestors are besought to give the young woman the 'womb' of an elephant so that she may give birth to ten children.¹³¹ There is, however, some evidence that the cost of educating children is beginning to become a factor in the attitude towards birth control, particularly among the educated classes, among the members of which a family of six children is often regarded as the ideal. As the procreation of children is the main aim of marriage, sterility is accepted as sufficient grounds for divorce. Sterility is usually attributed to youthful promiscuity and it is condemned. Fortes says the Talensi believe that it is better to die in poverty and leave children than to die childless but rich.

In Munonye's book, *Obi*, Warrior congratulates Obi on marrying a well-bred and beautiful wife. He then says that they can't call her their wife until she has produced children for the family; for what use is a kolanut tree if it fails to bear fruit?¹³² Nwapa describes how unhappy Idu was for not having a baby three years after their marriage. She was not pregnant, she had not even miscarried. Adiewere, her husband, was also worried because he was in love with his wife and did not want to marry another wife. Many people had advised him to marry another, but he had refused. He was not at heart a polygamist.¹³³ After getting his first baby, Adiewere was filled with joy. There was then proof that he was a man after all.

Another thorny question concerning African attitudes to marriage is that of the payment of the bride-price. Fafunwa writes:

Once a friend said: 'Babs, I learn that you buy wives in Africa.' I replied: 'Yes we do, and that is why they are dearer to us than yours to you.' But the truth is that the dowry a husband pays is a gift given to the parents as equipment fee for the bride. This amount is used to buy all the necessities a bride needs before marriage. This particular aspect of our social life has been wilfully misrepresented and we hope our American friends will understand. We love our women as passionately as the Americans and we are not in the habit of ill-treating them or regarding them as chattels.¹³⁴

¹³¹ Ampofo D.A., 'Ghanaian Culture and the Concept of a Small Family-Size', *The Legon Observer*, Vol. VI, 24th October 1969, pp. 14-15.

¹³² Munonye, *Obi*, p. 99.

¹³³ Nwapa Flora, *Idu*, p. 16.

¹³⁴ Fafunwa Babs, *An African Treasury*, p. 76.

In *The Lion and the Jewel*, in response to Lakunle's proposal of marriage, Sidi says that she is prepared to marry him as soon as he has paid her bride-price. Lakunle, the teacher who has joined the group that deliberately misrepresents the African tradition of the payment of the bride-price as a purchase of the bride, says:

Lakunle: 'A savage custom, barbaric, outdated, rejected, denounced, accursed, excommunicated, archaic, degrading, humiliating, unspeakable, redundant, retrogressive, remarkable, unspeakable.'¹³⁵

Lakunle is a bag of meaningless words. He uses all the words that have been used by foreigners to condemn African values. When Sidi asks whether his bag is empty when he stops his condemnation of the bride-price, he says that it is because he still owns only the *Shorter Companion* dictionary. His head has been stuffed with European values which he doesn't even understand. Sidi insists that her bride-price be paid because if she should marry without it, they will think she was not a virgin. Even though the bride-price is a gift to the parents of the girl it also is a way of honouring the girl for her virginity. When Lakunle kisses her as a lover she objects:

Sidi: 'No, don't I tell you I dislike
This strange unhealthy mouthing you perform
Every time, your gesture deceives me
Making me think you merely wish
To whisper something in my ear.
Then comes this licking of my lips with yours.
It's so unclean.'¹³⁶

Not only is kissing considered by some Africans as a strange and unhealthy habit, but romance as such is a foreign value. Romance is for a sophisticated society. This applies to married couples as well. In *The Rebel*, Ngurumo did not show pleasure when Seitu, his wife, approached him too openly. On the only occasion she flaunted herself at him, he stalked out of the hut, obviously greatly displeased. On his return he explained to her that he did not wish her to make herself so obvious to him:

'You are my wife', he reminded her. 'It is for the man to make the first move, not the woman. Talk to me whenever you wish. Say to me what you think is right — such things I shall not mind. I'll be glad to hear them. But let other relationships between us come as darkness and the morning sunlight which assuredly follows — naturally.'¹³⁷

Monogamy and polygamy are regarded as foreign and local values respectively. In a debate on marriage, Albert Busa describes monogamy

¹³⁵ Soyinka Wole, *The Lion and the Jewel*, p. 99.

¹³⁶ Ibid., pp. 100-101.

¹³⁷ Asare Bediako, *The Rebel*, pp. 9-10.

as 'an imported form of marriage with all its hypocritical aspects', and polygamy as 'a form of marriage native to us and as a historical institution nursed on the same cradle with the hills.'¹³⁸ In many books the man with many wives is portrayed as peaceful, happy and well-behaved and he wins the day.

Fafunwa says an African finds that there are more divorce cases in America, where people marry but one. In Africa men have the privilege of marrying two or more wives, all depending on the husband's economic backstay. He finds also that American women are more jealous than their African counterparts when it comes to love affairs.¹³⁹ It is obvious that both these systems of marriage have their weak and strong points. Clark, in *America, Their America*, wins a heated debate between himself and the Americans just because he speaks from knowledge of both polygamy and monogamy. These Americans, like other monogamists, criticize a system of which they are ignorant:

'Still, I don't see how I can share one man with another woman — Darling, that would be like allowing you other lovers!' The women remain petulant together.

'Well, the fellow says his mother is quite happy with his father who has a dozen other wives', the darling husbands assure them.

'O la la!' issues the universal whistle.

'And no two persons could be closer than my mother and my father are', I rub it in.

'How can that be?' The women rise in one voice. 'One man to several women deprives the wife of her rights!' they intone together.

'And what are those rights?' I laugh.

Surprisingly, there is a hush, for none there can think up immediately their famous well-guaranteed rights. Until one, spirited and aloud, speaks of her co-equal rights to any property her husband has — like the home and his business. To this I say my mother has her self-contained apartment in the concession or compound and that she has her own farming, fishing or independent trading to do when not helping with the larger business of her husband. And at her age, which probably is that of many of my fellow guests, she would be too concerned with the well-being of her children to go nervous and neurotic over sex as apparently is the preoccupation of most American wives.¹⁴⁰

Concerning the question of marriage between Africans and Europeans some writers' attitude is similar to that of the African students who responded to the Klineberg and Zavalloni questionnaire. Whilst they do not in any way encourage mixed marriages, they also don't oppose them. The general attitude is that expressed by Kola in *The Interpreters*. When

¹³⁸ Ikiddeh Ime, 'Popular Fiction in Ghana: An Introductory Study', *Okyeame*, Vol. IV, 1969, p. 95.

¹³⁹ Fafunwa Babs, *An African Treasury*, p. 76.

¹⁴⁰ Clark J.P., *America, Their America*, p. 148.

Ayo, Faseyi's white wife, becomes a little sensitive to Kola's unfriendliness, she finds out from him if he is one of those who disapprove of mixed marriages. She claims to know that some of her husband's friends disapprove of her. Kola says: 'Isn't that your own business, and your husband's?'¹⁴¹ This is the kind of neutrality that characterizes some writers' attitudes. There are writers who describe mixed marriages as having strained relations owing to adjustment problems. On the one hand the parents have to accommodate the situation of their son having married a foreigner without their approval with a little more misgivings than if their son had married an unknown African girl without their approval. On the other hand, white wives have also to make an effort to adjust to an African way of life. Monica, for example, adjusted very well, and became even more African than her African husband. A number of writers point out that mixed marriages are likely to fail, unless proper adjustments are made. We may, therefore, say that what Klineberg and Zavalloni found to be positive acceptance of mixed marriages should be taken as 'qualified acceptance'. The conditions for acceptance are that it is a personal choice and that the people concerned must be prepared to meet problems of adjustment, which are not insurmountable.

10. *Reform of the African Mind and Education*

Post-colonial African education has been criticized as being an imitation of the European system. Education broadly defined is the aggregate of all the processes by means of which a person develops ability, attitudes and other forms of behaviour of positive and negative values in the society in which he lives. Bentsi-Enchill, one of the critics of African education, maintains that the Africans have tended to feel satisfied with themselves, particularly in education once they have arranged things more or less as they are in Britain. He maintains that this is the main principle on which universities and the courses offered by them are generally based.¹⁴² There is no doubt that the British model has prevailed. Opoku assesses the post-independence educational policy as follows:

Our education policy has much to do with the state of mind which has been described as backdoor mentality. Since it was established by our former masters, since not much change has taken place in the basic orientation and education — at least the formal one which we acquire in school — education remains a trip out of Africa, the destination of which is the 'glittering' world of Europe. We go to school to learn about how others live, not how we live; to learn about what others have done, not what we have done — and then we go out to imitate them.¹⁴³

¹⁴¹ Soyinka Wole, *The Interpreters*, p. 49.

¹⁴² Bentsi-Enchill Kwamena, *Institutional Challenges of our Time*, p. 27.

¹⁴³ Opoku Kofi Asare, *Independence of the Mind* (unpublished, Ghana) p. 3.

The 'trip out of Africa' type of education refers both to education received in Europe as well as primary and secondary school education offered in Africa.

Armah says that scholarships which are given to African students for studies in Europe or America are a farce. This may not apply to all cases, however, Armah maintains that African students in America do not get scholarship money for intelligence. It is payment for obedience. The gist of the lectures given is:

'BEFORE THE WHITE MEN CAME. Ten pages of blood and savagery. THE WHITE MAN COMES. ENLIGHTENMENT, CIVILIZATION, PROGRESS, DEVELOPMENT—and of the white man's words for the white man's rule. It takes obedience, not intelligence, to accept that as knowledge...' ¹⁴⁴

Armah holds that the success of educated and Westernized Africans who are schooled in this type of education are contemptible worms. This type of African is happy to get the degrees and then go home and relax on the shoulders of the suffering people. The end of this type of education is not work but self-indulgence. It produces duplicate copies of colonialists who are as parasitic as worms are. Earlier in the book, Modin, a scholarship student in America, recorded in his diary that he should have long stopped attending lectures which were part of a ritual celebrating a tradition called great because it is European, Western and white. His participation in this ritual made him lonely and a split person, and even less than a person. To an African, American education is like participation in an alien communal ritual. ¹⁴⁵

Clark questions the courses of study many African scholarship students pursue in America. He doubts if the courses done by African students have any practical value to them and to African society. In this respect, Clark suggests the practice of letting charity begin at home. ¹⁴⁶ Awoonor, ironically, wonders if the problems in Africa could justly be attributed to 'the ignorance of the learned':

Was it the ignorance of the learned? The ignorance of the learned. He had known of a Ghanaian boy who spent five years in England learning Old English and Transformational Grammar. A few friends he had known had had glittering careers at Oxford studying Heroditus. The ignorance of the learned. It doesn't sound like it. ¹⁴⁷

The problem is that this high-sounding knowledge does not prepare the African for the role he is expected to play in his country.

At the local level, education is geared to discourage African culture. Africa, which should be the basis of education, is ignored. Thus the

¹⁴⁴ Armah Ayi Kwei, *Why are We so Blest?*, New York, Doubleday, 1970, p. 161.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., pp. 31-32.

¹⁴⁶ Clark G.C., *America, Their America*, p. 159.

¹⁴⁷ Awoonor Kofi, *This Earth, My Brother*, p. 26.

educated African tends to look down upon things African. An education which does this prepares the Africans for a subservient role to Europe and things European. African educationalists are considering liberating their education system from imported forms of knowledge which may still be doing damage to the long-term goals of the people.

It is no longer accepted that Europeans brought education to Africa, as if they had to write on a blank page. Many writers realize that it was a mistake for Africans, in adopting Western education, to behave as if they had no education of their own before the arrival of Europeans. When the scale of social values was displaced the Africans should only have adjusted to changing times and not to throw overboard their own system of education. References have been made to the knowledge Africans passed from generation to generation, on weather, seasonal and climatic changes, midwifery, history, medicine, public administration, trade and agriculture. A study of the traditional education will furnish the guiding principles upon which future African models should be based.

11. *African Personality and Outlook on Life*

Many writers express the opinion that African culture is essentially different from Western culture. One of the differences between the two cultures is that whilst in Western culture everything is sacrificed to the object for its own sake, in African culture the important thing is the meaning which the creator gives his object, this having significance only in so far as a man gives it one.¹⁴⁸ This difference also influences ideologies and the general conception of life. For instance, African societies are less materialistic than Western societies as a result of there being a difference in the conception of life the two societies uphold.

Some African writers have realized that a serious examination of the potentialities, strengths and capabilities, customs and the way Africans conduct their affairs, reveals an outstanding capacity for containing diversity without disruptive violence. By cultural means, Africans have contained diversity in an area as large as sub-Saharan Africa and have afforded protection to the people. Muntu Oburoni writes:

It is not a matter of belief, for there is no tradition here that violence as such is wrong; it is a matter of culture, of the way of life that African peoples follow. We can find clues to it, in African laughter, in African music and dancing, and in African distaste for interminable quarrels. If there is any real meaning in the idea of an 'African personality', this is where it lies, and it is a far more precious gift than any of the superficialities with which that expression was associated in the past.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁸ Wauthier Claude, *The Literature and Thought of Modern Africa, A Survey*, p. 279.

¹⁴⁹ Muntu Oburoni, 'Ingredients of an African Ideology — The Strength of African Culture', *The Legon Observer*, Vol. V, 15/3/1970, p. 9.

There is an awareness that the attempts to define the African Personality have not been very successful. The definitions that we have should be regarded as open-ended. Awosika says that an objective study of the African Personality has to assess it as an idealism and also assess the impact of this personality on the world scene. By African Personality one is trying to bring into a sharp focus what the place of an African is, should be or must be on the world stage, in relation to other equivalent personalities (e.g. Western Europe, India, China, the United States of America, the U.S.S.R., etc.). In emphasizing the relationship of the African Personality to other personalities, Awosika says:

The performance and achievement of the African, at any international meeting, will depend upon his own individual personality as well as on everything that he has for presentation, be this an idea, wealth, policy, performance, art or culture... What is the stereotype of the African in his homeland in the mind of non-Africans in other parts of the world? And what do they think of him when he gets out of his continent to confront these other personalities?

All these questions can be of paramount importance in international dealings of any category: summit, student, diplomat, industrialist, clergy and so on.¹⁵⁰

Even though the African personality has not been fully defined as yet, it is possible to pinpoint certain values which work against or strengthen this personality. In *The Interpreters*, there is a scene in which African academics attend a Professor's party and display un-African tastes and behaviour. As Sagoe and Bandele were entering the room of the party they heard some shrill voices in 'a strange dialect of some British tribe'. On coming closer in order to ascertain what was happening, they noticed that the shrill voices came from some African ladies:

'Wait a minute. I see black faces — are they Nigerians?'

'Appearances deceive, come on.'¹⁵¹

Everything in the room of the party was artificial and dead. Sagoe went to collect an orange from a bowl of fresh fruit that was on the table. To his fury he discovered that they were plastic fruits. All over the room there were artificial fruits, plants and decorations. This artificiality is un-African. Most Africans reject artificial things and artificial behaviour. African writers link up this European artificiality with death they see in Western culture. Armah puts it very strongly:

Europe has no need to destroy us singly any more. The force for our own death is within us. We have swallowed the wish for our destruction... This place is a graveyard for my spirit. Not mine alone. Ours. The only people who survive here are whites,

¹⁵⁰ Awosika V.O., *An African Meditation*, pp. 13-14.

¹⁵¹ Soyinka Wole, *The Interpreters*, p. 139.

and they have accepted themselves as mere bodies, killed the spirit in them, or put it at the service of insatiable bodies.¹⁵²

In *No Longer at Ease*, Achebe says that going from Lagos mainland to Ikoyi on a Saturday night is like going from a bazaar to a funeral. And the vast Lagos cemetery which separates the two places helps to deepen this feeling. Achebe says that for all its luxurious bungalows and flats and its extensive greenery, Ikoyi is like a graveyard. It has no corporate life — at any rate for Africans who live there. Many writers have associated the European way of life with death, and whiteness has come to be a symbol of death:

Sometimes one kernel was shiny — black and alive, the other powdery-white and dead.¹⁵³

If Africans imitate Europeans they bring death to their personality.

The Africans' attitude to death has to do with their cyclic conception of time. Africans do not fear old age because it is a title of honour in African circles. Their fear of death is also less intense than that of Europeans, because Africans believe strongly that death is a call to the land of the dead, a place supposed to be far away in the unfathomable depths of the earth.¹⁵⁴ This is why people have to feast before they die to make sure that they are ready for this long journey to the land of the dead.

Some Africans believe in reincarnation. In *Obi*, when Joe declared that there was nothing like reincarnation, the people retorted that the Christians were big fools when it came to such matters. For what else did they think happened to the spirits of the righteous dead? How can families stay together if the dead fathers did not return in new bodies? And were there no cases in which the dead had returned to life with the same scars they had in their earlier existence?¹⁵⁵ Africans don't want to impose their belief in reincarnation on other people, they only explain their attitude towards death. The African attitude towards death explains the African conception of life. Their philosophy is that there is a strong connection between life and death. In *The Interpreters*, Sekoni explains this connection in this way:

'In the d-d-dome of the cosmos, th-there is com...plete unity of L-l-life. L-life is like the g-g-godhead, the p-p-plurality of its m-m-manifest...tations is only an illusion. Th-the g-g-godhead is one. So is life, or death, b-b-both are c-c-combined in th-the single d-d-dome of ex...istence.'¹⁵⁶

There is no doubt that the African cultural identity movement has many manifestations. The movement seeks to put an end to the worship of foreign gods and to project to the world values distinctively African.

¹⁵² Armah Ayi Kwei, *Why are we so Blest?*, p. 159.

¹⁵³ Achebe Chinua, *No Longer at Ease*, p. 18.

¹⁵⁴ Aluko T.M., *One Man, One Wife*, p. 134.

¹⁵⁵ Munonye John, *Obi*, p. 95.

¹⁵⁶ Soyinka Wole, *The Interpreters*, p. 122.

CHAPTER II

MONEY AND POWER CORRUPT

A. THE WORSHIP OF MONEY AND ITS DEHUMANIZING EFFECT

Money in its present form was brought to Africa by the Europeans. Extensive trade was done in Africa through the system of barter. There were, however, simpler forms of money which were used to facilitate trade. Some Africans regard money as an outgroup value. Achebe writes:

The white man had indeed brought a lunatic religion, but he had also brought a trading store and for the first time palm-oil and kernel became things of great price, and much money flowed into Umuofia.¹

It appears that African societies did not object to the introduction of money as it facilitated trade; however, what some African writers regret nowadays is the fact that money is being worshipped. It is not by coincidence that Achebe associates what he calls the white man's 'lunatic religion' with money. Even before the settlement of the Europeans in Africa money had been introduced by early foreign traders. When the white settlers built trading stores in Africa 'much money flowed into' the country, and as a result 'for the first time palm oil and kernel' and other commodities 'became things of great price'. Paradoxically those who brought into Africa the religion which teaches that the love of money is the 'root of all evil' are the ones who are said to worship money. Writing about money as 'King' of the Western societies, Duodu says:

And one had to leave
This jasmin-scented
Fool's paradise behind
To face reality
Of cold, technical, growth;
Where money is King
And every word
Has two meanings;
Where graphs and computers
Determine a man's worth
And naïve humanity
Is taken for madness;

¹ Achebe Chinua, *Things Fall Apart*, London, Heinemann, 1958, p. 161.

But who can defeat Nature?
The dialectic of Life.²

It is not the use but the worship of money which is dehumanizing. Adoring money ushers people into the 'fool's paradise' where an attempt is made to defeat nature. It is in a money-worshipping society that a man's worth is determined by 'graphs and computers'. Duodu is contemptuous of this type of living and pleads for a return to Eden where naïve humanity is not regarded as madness. Some Africans are chilled by the coldness of life in the money-worshipping society. Yedu Bannerman, in *The Cry for Justice in Tema*,³ complains that money has become the measure of all life. Man from day to day comes to have less and less time for the humanities and arts.

Armah explains that the worship of money in Africa started after the World Wars. The soldiers who returned from the war are said to have been the first victims of the worship of money:

No one before had told me of so many people going away to fight and coming back with blood and money eating up their minds.⁴

It is significant that money 'was eating up' the minds of the soldiers. Money was destroying their minds. The word 'blood' is used to show that there was violence both on the battlefield as well as in the minds of the soldiers which destroyed the essence of life. It is apparent that these soldiers had learnt and adopted this exaggerated love for money from the foreign countries they had been to. The author continues to say that African people are discovering something which seemed hard only when it was new, the fact that money is not just pieces of paper the rich farmers burned to show their wealth. Money is life.

The Onitsha Market Literature authors give a few ways in which it is possible nowadays to speak of money as life:

Money makes a man. If you have no money, you are talking for nothing. When you get money you get many friends. If you have no money, you are not better than a woman.

I don't mind when there is money in the pocket. 'I will go to London next week' is because there is money. 'This man plans his business well' is the work of money. When you get money, you get new plans: 'Business is not moving well' is the cry of the poor man. Business moves well for those who have money. Rich men get more money from the poor men to increase their richness.⁵

² Duodu Cameron, 'Return to Eden', *Messages: Poems from Ghana*, London, Heinemann, 1972, p. 112.

³ Bannerman J. Yedu, *The Cry for Justice in Tema*, Ghana, Accra Publishers, 1972, p. 48.

⁴ Armah Ayi Kwei, *The Beautiful Ones are not yet Born*, London, Heinemann, 1969, pp. 74-75.

⁵ Obiechina E.N., *Onitsha Market Literature*, London, Heinemann, 1972, pp. 85-86.

According to this writer, social status, resourcefulness in business, independence of thought and movement and the ability to make friends, all depend on money. He is, however, mindful of the fact that the rich exploit the poor. What he emphasizes is that the whole of life is associated with money: 'Life is money and money is life.'⁶ Another author who believes that 'money is life' writes to say that even if one is the ugliest man in the world, with money, one gains love and respect. Lack of money leaves one unprotected from insults. Those that have no money are called old but those that have money remain ever young in the eyes of the people. Money so dominates the world that it can 'make the accused to be the complainant as well as make the complainant to be the accused'.⁷ The love of money is capturing even the most conservative elements in African society today. In *The Onitsha Market Literature*, Chief Jombo, in an argument with his educated wife, expresses his views categorically:

My own view is that educated as you may be, I have more money than you. And money is more important than book learning ... Forget about my foolish wife. I'll teach her that book-learning is different from money and that possession of money is more important than possession of book-knowledge. Without money there would be no book-learning.⁸

In his identity crisis, this chief embraces money and rejects book-learning. It is no surprise that 'book-learning' and 'money' are put on the balance since most Onitsha Market Literature authors rate money and education as being the two major worries in the world today.⁹

Some authors advise their people to use money wisely and not to be too extravagant or over-thrifty:

Some people earn 4/- a day and eat only 9^d and save 3/3. But some people have 4/- a day and eat 1/6 and save 2/6. I myself will like to eat bellyful because bad economy in sickness and lack of maintenance weakens the nerves and brings premature death. I do not advise you to eat all you have for too much of everything is dangerous.¹⁰

Another author who claims to be 'the Great Master of Life' is critical of people who prefer to become very rich and die untimely. He advocates moderation. He prefers 'to have moderate money and live longer because life is precious and money is money'. When he says 'money is money' he means showing that money is not precious. He is critical of lust for money and money grabbing. Possession of a lot of money is said to

⁶ Ibid., p. 86.

⁷ Ibid., p. 113.

⁸ Ibid., pp. 47-48.

⁹ Ibid., p. 86.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 113.

shorten life. One author points out that money has become so popular that many people have lost their lives because of money. He refers to bank-robberies and murders.

Money is clearly seen as having a dehumanizing effect. Armah describes people who travel to work in buses in quest of money as 'walking bodies' and 'walking corpses'. They are like little insects caught in 'endless pools'. The man collecting bus fares, like anybody else involved in the mad quest for money, is dead and breathes the 'rotten stench' of money into his lungs.

In the weak light inside the bus he peered closely at the markings on the note. Then a vague but persistent odour forced itself on him and he rolled the cedi up and deliberately, deeply smelled it. He had to smell it again, this time standing up and away from the public leather of the bus seat. But the smell was not his mistake. Fascinated, he breathed it slowly into his lungs. It was a most unexpected smell for something so new to have; it was a very old smell, very strong, and so very rotten that the stench itself of it came with a curious, satisfying pleasure.¹¹

Indeed, this is a curious kind of pleasure and satisfaction which is derived from the smell of money. There appears to be something vulgar about people who derive pleasure from a rotten smell of money. Awoonor also speaks of how people after World War II 'possessed a sharp nose for smelling quick money'.¹² What is being condemned is the greed for money. Money is portrayed as a lifegiving force to those who breathe its rotten smell into their lungs. This is, however, a rotten kind of life. Awoonor gives an illustration of the corrupting influence of money. Sammy, an assistant secretary in the Ministry of the Interior in Ghana, was attending a dance at the Tiptoe night club. As he got out of the car an army of boys swarmed to him from the darkness and shouted: 'Masa, I watch de car. Me, me, masa.' Sammy selected a bright-eyed one and asked him to look after the car. This boy gave Sammy a salute and proudly turned to his colleagues that he had done out of business:

A policeman, perhaps awakened by the noise, walked over. 'Masa, you must not park here, sah.' Sammy tossed him a two-shilling piece and said, 'You too look after the car, eh?' 'Yes sah, masa, tank you.'¹³

Sammy becomes 'masa', 'sah' and a king to be saluted because of the two-shilling pieces he is able to toss to the boys and the policeman. It is money that gives him all the titles and privileges. Human relations and general order are influenced by Sammy's possession of money and

¹¹ Armah Ayi Kwei, *The Beautiful Ones are not yet Born*, p. 3.

¹² Awoonor Kofi, *This Earth, My Brother*, London, Heinemann, 1972, p. 86.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

the boys' and policeman's want of money. It is in this way that money distorts human relations. Commenting on these dances, such as Sammy was attending, Awoonor says:

They will dance all night in the city halls, in front of drunken foreign dignitaries, a slow dance of death.

Awoonor associates the death that money brings into the minds of the people with the death of Jesus Christ: 'He betrayed their Saviour for thirty pieces of silver.'¹⁴ The point which comes out here is that it is the same love of money which led Judas to betray Jesus, that is plaguing African society today. Armah has effectively used the Passion week background to describe scenes in which money is worshipped. In this society 'honesty could only be a social vice, for the one who chose to indulge in it nothing but a very hostile form of selfishness, a very perverse selfishness'.¹⁵

There are many examples in African literature of people who speak against the worship of money. In *People of the City*, as Lajide is trying to seduce Beatrice as he claims to be more of a gentleman than Sango, Beatrice replies:

'Money is not everything. A man can have money and still not be a gentleman!'¹⁶

Achebe in *Vengeful Creditor* tells of how the rich people in Nigeria opposed the implementation of the free primary education scheme since they needed servants. Mr. Mark Emenike, the big government man of the village, was out looking for a girl to take care of their baby. He begged Martha, a poor widow, to give them her daughter. He offered her £5 for the girl's services in the first year — plus feeding and clothing. When Martha accepted the offer she pointed out that money was not her concern:

'Of course it is not money I am concerned about, but whether my daughter will be well cared for.'¹⁷

Emenike, rich as he is, is not ashamed of paying the nurse girl only £5 a year and yet the poor widow says that she does not mind what her daughter earns. This is another case of the rich exploiting the poor. Martha is still human and she does not want to belong to a money-worshipping society. Mr. Emenike and Martha evidently belong to two different worlds and their attitudes to money are different.

Agunwa discusses the futility of the money chase when one of his characters says:

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 116.

¹⁵ Armah Ayi Kwei, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, p. 60.

¹⁶ Ekwensi Cyprian, *People of the City*, London, Heinemann, 1963, p. 132.

¹⁷ Achebe Chinua, *Girls at War*, London, Heinemann, 1972, p. 63.

'I simply mean that money is like bush fowls in the grasslands, perhaps never to be caught... How can you collect money?'¹⁸

This passage suggests that hunting for money is as useless as trying to catch bush fowls because as you run after them they fly away and hide, unlike domestic fowls which do not fly. In the context in which this expression was used, the idea was that it is difficult to recover a money debt. If the debt had been in kind it would have been easy to recover it even in the absence of Ofodile. In spite of the fact that the use of money facilitates trade, money debts are very difficult to collect. Agunwa also describes a group of traders who adhere to a 'Give us this day our daily bread' policy in business. These traders think that it is boldness to insult and cheat customers and to damn the consequences. For them there is no consideration of the idea that the success of a salesman is to sell and sell again.¹⁹

Djoleto shows that cheating in trade is justified and that cheating should be regarded as money-making:

'Nonsense! Trade is trade. If you don't cheat you don't survive. The companies cheat, what's wrong in cheating them? In fact, it should be known as money making or business. You either win the money or lose it. No more.'²⁰

The money gained through cheating, as Djoleto explains, is used to give the children the best education possible and to send them overseas for higher education. This is done in the belief that the end justifies the means.

Nwapa compares the possession of money to the possession of children:

'There is nobody in this world who can say that he is content with the world. Some have children and no money, some money and no children.'²¹

The suggestion here is that the love for money competes with the love for children. Those who love money have to sacrifice their love for children. Nwapa says this after mentioning that true Africans prefer having children to having money. It is alleged that those who have sacrificed their love for children for the sake of money are not happy.

Asiedu holds that poverty is akin to peace:

Good days have gone
That no longer shall be —
All was poor;
So all was peace: —

¹⁸ Agunwa Clement, *More than Once*, London, Longmans, 1967, pp. 136-137.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 168-169.

²⁰ Djoleto Amu, *The Strange Man*, London Heinemann, 1967, p. 233.

²¹ Nwapa Flora, *Idu*, London, Heinemann, 1970, p. 29.

Days that no money was used
Were the days of real peace.²²

If this were the general attitude of all Africans, maybe the poor countries would cease being apologetic about their poverty.

B. POWER CORRUPTS

Armah gives a description of a militant politician who was corrupted by power. The power of this young leader during the pre-independence period lay in the fact that he accepted his powerlessness as an individual. He addressed the people and told them of how they would have power if they came together to make their power work. He liked to be with the people and to speak to them but as soon as he got into power he kept away from the people:

Now all we do is sit and wait, like before he came. It must be power. I say this because he is not the only one whom power has lost. It has happened to those around him, those who were not always there for the simple sake of the power they could find.²³

The writer does not doubt the sincerity of the leaders before they get into power. They do not come forward only 'for the sake of the power' they can find. According to him it is not the weakness of the power-holders that is responsible for the abuse of power, 'it is power itself' that corrupts the leaders. Armah reifies power. Maybe he expects us to read more into his words than is evident at the surface level. It appears that he should not be understood as someone who connives at the misdeeds of the leaders. He emphasizes the fact that almost all the leaders have fallen under the corrupting influence of power.

The power madness of leaders manifests itself in many ways. For instance, many African leaders lost their greatest opportunity for effecting a real social revolution when, on assuming office, they allowed themselves to be persuaded that a way of showing the dignity of power was to exhibit the gaudy aspects of European civilization: motorcades consisting of the most expensive European cars, surrounded by the paraphernalia of colonial rule,²⁴ and other such things. The state finances are drained for the sake of the importation of these 'bourgeois' commodities which are used to display the power of the new governments. One writer reacts very strongly to the wasteful purchase of expensive European cars:

'Sir — These cars! I mean these "bourgeois" cars which zoom past me everyday on my way to work. They make me halt and stare. I was not sure what my feelings were, in the past, when

²² Asiedu Lawrence M., 'Money and Poverty', Sangster Ellen Geer, ed., *To Know my Own*, p. 38.

²³ Armah Ayi Kwei, *The Beautiful Ones are not yet Born*, pp. 103-104.

²⁴ *The Legon Observer*, Editorial, Vol. VI, 19th November 1970, p. 6.

I saw these cars run past me. But they have become clearly defined now. It is surprising how men of influence publicly defend the importation of such cars into the country. It is a matter of common diplomacy if people keep quiet over such policies. These cars remind me of the Government's earnest appeals to Ghanaians to make sacrifices in aid of the economic stabilization programme the N.L.C. is so admirably implementing.

Sacrifice involves giving up some of what one is in dire need of. Ghanaians, therefore, expect good results out of their sacrifices. The influx of these wingless aeroplanes will definitely make Ghanaians doubt the genuineness of these appeals. I do not know what these cars can do better than our famous 190-300 Mercedes Benz cars and the V.W. saloon.²⁵

In private circles the display of power manifests itself in ostentatious living. Armah gives an example of how some African leaders spend time and energy surrounding themselves with expensive Western gadgets just for the sake of attracting the beholding eye and to make it accept the power of the owner. In the end, the general public gets to think that nothing else matters, but that the end of life is the getting of these comfortable things.²⁶

A few of the leaders have thought of power in terms of service, and, therefore, of the ways in which they could most effectively render this service. For many, all that matters is that they are in parliamentary or other administrative positions in order to look 'great'. What complicates the situation is that the African social structure does not allow people to live as individuals but in a community. The powerful have, therefore, to keep or advance their social positions together with wives, children, brothers and sisters, and cousins on both sides of the family. The lever of the reshuffling in the social structure is money, and so this leads to money grabbing and all sorts of corruption.²⁷

The corrupting influence of power also manifests itself in the snobbish way in which people of influence behave. Awoonor gives a description of Colonel Letsu, a snob without the knowledge of what exactly to be snobbish about. He carried his five foot seven like a colossus, and he was impatient with civilians. He was a vindictive man, who once knew poverty and was determined to cover his path with the roar and thunder of his martial.²⁸

The Busia government was blamed for displaying their intellectual arrogance. Some of the government officials even campaigned for election in their academic robes. They carried their academic nomenclatures around in perfectly non-academic situations. Academic arrogance by

²⁵ *The Legon Observer*, Vol. III, No. 16, 2nd November 1968, p. 20.

²⁶ Armah Ayi Kwei, *The Beautiful Ones are not yet Born*, pp. 170-177.

²⁷ *The Legon Observer*, Editorial, Vol. VI, 19th November 1970, p. 5.

²⁸ Awoonor Kofi, *This Earth, My Brother*, pp. 127-128.

some leaders is part of the general power display. All so often the mere possession of an impressive looking chain of academic degrees so captures the possessor and others that the degrees become ends in themselves.²⁹

Power drunkenness has also revealed itself in the refusal of governments to allow political change through the ballot box or through constitutional channels. Usually the governing parties adopt an objective of remaining in power indefinitely. Rival party leaders are arrested and put in jail without trial and their parties banned. This has certainly been the most important and widespread cause of military intervention. Some military coup leaders, however, have proved to be as corrupt as their predecessors once they are in power.³⁰ Many governments have been charged for corruption, economic mismanagement, ostentatious living and arrogance, as well as tyranny—that is, the abuse or callous and arbitrary use of power—on the part of politicians. Since all these misdeeds by the politicians become evident one or two years after the assumption of authority by the government, the powerless conclude that it is power that corrupts.

C. CORRUPTION AND BRIBERY

There are people whose distorted image of the Africans has led them to trace the problem of corruption and bribery in Africa to the claim that Africans are corrupt by nature. Achebe has given an analysis of this kind of thinking in *No Longer at Ease*. After Obi had lost a court case and was charged for accepting a bribe, Mr. Green and many Europeans were celebrating Obi's fall at a tennis club bar. They were theorizing about why Obi had accepted a bribe:

'I cannot understand why he did it', said the British Council man thoughtfully.

'I can', said Mr. Green simply. 'What I can't understand is why people like you refuse to face the facts.' Mr. Green was famous for speaking his mind. He wiped his red face with the white towel on his neck. 'The African is corrupt through and through.'... 'They are all corrupt', repeated Mr. Green. 'I'm all for equality and all that. I for one would hate to live in South Africa. But equality won't alter facts.'

'What facts?' asked the British Council man, who was relatively new to the country. There was a lull in the general conversation, as many people were now listening to Mr. Green without appearing to do so.

'The fact that over countless centuries the African has been the victim of the worst climate in the world and of every imaginable

²⁹ Ofori J.M., 'The Coming Search in Ghana', *The Legon Observer*, 25th February 1972, p. 101.

³⁰ Otchere Eric Mensah, 'Who is an Ideal Ruler in Africa', *The Legon Observer*, Vol. VI, 8th October 1971, p. 11.

disease. Hardly his fault. But he has been sapped mentally and physically. We have brought him Western education. But what use is it to him? He is...'

'We are talking about this young man who took a bribe.'³¹ Mr. Green reveals a typical racist thinking. The inhabitants of the entire continent are dismissed as being corrupt and mentally and physically inferior. A single case of a young African who has taken a bribe is sufficient reason for the condemnation of all Africans. Mr. Green and his colleagues, in spite of their stay in Africa, have not observed that African society frowns even at little acts of pilfering. They seem not to know that theft is punishable by death in African society. Mr. Green also appears not to know some Africans' claim that they learned bribery and corruption from their colonial masters:

'You think white men don't eat bribe? Come to our department. They eat more than black men nowadays.'³²

The interpretation of this statement is that white officials in Africa have taught Africans bribery and corruption and that they demand larger sums of money as bribes. Mr. Green speaks as if bribery is an African invention. Africans know of the corruption scandals taking place in the Western countries and they also know that Africa is not the only place plagued by corruption. Since Africa has poor and developing states, the effect of corruption, no matter how minimal, is likely to have a greater adverse effect on the Africans than graver cases of corruption may have on a developed country.³³ Koillarbi sees the problem in Africa as simply that there are no checks in the society to discourage people from giving and taking bribes. The police institutions are often too weak to make the necessary investigations and arrests. Secondly, because of loose and fluid political systems, political leaders often manage to manipulate the institutions of the State in order to place themselves above the law. Thus, politicians may use their parliamentary majority to protect a corrupt minister while the military administrator will not hesitate to use threats of military might to protect any of the colleagues who may prove to be corrupt.³⁴

Awosika poses a question which throws further light on the issue of corruption and bribery in Africa:

Are there certain factors which make the average African more susceptible to bribery, corruption, and nepotism than his counterpart in Europe, America, or Asia? Are these related to

³¹ Achebe Chinua, *No Longer at Ease*, London, Heinemann, 1960, pp. 2-3.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 33.

³³ Koillarbi Agyare, 'Ghana and the Future', *The Legon Observer*, Vol. IX, No. 1, 11th January 1974, p. 4.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

customs and other socio-psychological factors in the African background?³⁵

The African's traditional generosity shown in the exchange of gifts, and giving gratitude in kind in the form of gifts, serves to weaken the sensitivity of an average African to the giving and taking of bribes. Similarly corruption and nepotism are tied up with the extended family structure which obliges members to share their positions, status and wealth with their next of kin. The editor of the *Legon Observer* also answers this question by referring to the socio-economic forces that adversely act on the rulers:

The forces include the following: our traditional family patterns and the ideas that keep them alive; traditional ideas about 'government' and about the normative relations between age-groups; our half-baked ideas about the indices of 'bigness', or prestige, or high status, about the relations between wealth and power; the fact that there are few avenues for honest money-making in an era in which people are convinced that wealth is the gateway to security, to honour and above all to power.³⁶

The identity crisis that faces many African leaders arises in most cases owing to an unbalanced value system. Commissions of Inquiry have confirmed instances of inefficiency, dishonesty and plain thievery in the independent African states. A good number of the public servants who constitute the constant element of the ruling class in which politicians are only birds of passage, have been found hopelessly unreliable. One writer who pleads for an elite reform says:

... What one fails to understand is why a society which frowns upon, and punishes, little acts of pilfering condones largescale plundering. Are we creating a two-tier nation in which it is alright for people at the top to steal big sums, but in which offences of a similar nature, but on a smaller scale and in the lower social groups, are severely punished?³⁷

Some African writers maintain that African politicians are manipulated and corrupted by foreign business interests.³⁸ Foreign business concerns operate in a situation where the masses are exploited and a few people at the top are given huge sums of money. Ojukwu traces the Nigerian corruption of the 1960s to the way in which Nigeria as a state was exploited by Europe:

³⁵ Awosika V.O., *An African Meditation*, Lagos, African Literary and Scientific Publications, 1967, p. 132.

³⁶ *The Legon Observer*, Editorial, Vol. VI, 19th November 1971, p. 4.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

³⁸ Achebe Chinua, 'The Duty and Involvement if the African Writer, *The African Reader: Independent Africa*, New York, Vintage Books, 1970, p. 167.

Nigeria was indeed a very wicked and corrupt country in spite of the glorious image given her in the European press. We know why Nigeria was given that image. It was her reward for serving the economic and political interests of her European masters.³⁹

Soyinka describes a situation in which Sekoni, an African Senior Civil Engineer, broke down as his power station at Ijioha was dismissed as junk when the furnace of the station had never been lit. The Chairman of the Board, the sole contractor for Project Ijioha which was registered as a subsidiary company in the name of his two-month-old niece, organized an expatriate expert to condemn the power station.

'Constitute yourself into a one-man commission of enquiry and probe the construction of our power station at Ijioha which was built without estimates approved expenditure.'

'Is it unsafe for operation?' and he winked, a truly expert expat. expert's wink.

'That's the safest idea. You put it in technical language.'

And the expatriate expert came to Ijioha, saw, and condemned. And the chairman read the report and said, 'That expert never fails me', salivating on the epithets, a wasteful expenditure, highly dangerous conditions, unsuitable materials, unsafe for operation.

'Bring me the Write-off file', chortled the chairman. And the project was written off while parliament at question time resounded to 'the escapade of the mad engineer'... (The chairman) cleaned out a few thousands in immediate compensation and filed claims for a few thousands more. 'I always say it, the Write-offs pay better than fulfilled contracts.'⁴⁰

The expatriate expert played an important role in the corruption of the chairman of the Board.

There have also been cases of trips made abroad under the pretence of attending conferences though the real purpose is to go 'shopping'. It is evident in the refusal to make a distinction between an office and a person as, for example, when goods are ordered tax-free for oneself though the law explicitly allows exemptions only for one's office. Rumours also abound of politicians engaged in business undertakings with relatives, wives and friends as front-people.⁴¹

Armah shows how the new African states have inherited corruption from the colonial regime. He describes the G.N.T.C. shops in Ghana as being old colonial institutions. In spite of the fact that the G.N.T.C. shops are regarded as being new, only the name had changed with independence:

³⁹ Ojukwu Emeka, *The Ahiara Declaration*, Geneva, Mark Press, 1969, pp. 20-21.

⁴⁰ Soyinka Wole, *The Interpreters*, London, Heinemann, 1972, pp. 27-29.

⁴¹ *The Legon Observer*, Editorial, Vol. VI, 19th November 1970, p. 5.

The shop had always been there, and in the old days it had belonged to a rich Greek and was known by his name, A. G. Leventis. So in a way the thing was new. Yet the stories that were sometimes heard about it were not stories of something young and vigorous, but the same old stories of money changing hands and throats getting moistened and palms getting greased. Only this time if the old stories aroused any anger, there was nowhere for it to go. The sons of the nation were now in charge, after all. How completely the new thing took after the old.⁴²

The stories of 'money changing hands', 'throats getting moistened' and 'palms getting greased' in independent Africa are old. They are a colonial legacy and they also reflect the involvement of foreign interests in Africa today. However, the 'sons of the nation who are now in charge' are not given any absolution from corruption.

In a discussion between a messenger and a telephone clerk at a railway station in Ghana, we gather that the Ghana lottery is more Ghanaian than Ghana. The messenger claims to know people who won more than five hundred cedis, who have not got their money for over a year. The messenger claims that before he can get his money he has to bribe both the police as well as the officials at the lottery place.⁴³ This is an indication of the alarming proportions that bribery and corruption have reached in some parts of Africa. It also shows how depressed the people are by these evils. When the messenger who intends bribing the lottery official is accused of corrupting a public officer, he gives what Armah calls a dead smile.

Whilst there are some writers who believe that the remedy to corruption and bribery should be found in the African values, Bentsi-Enchill recommends that a device which the French use can be adopted to control this problem in public and private life. He suggests that an independent inspectorate which has powers to appear in any department without warning should be instituted. This inspectorate should make any kind of check on transactions that it considers necessary. Experienced and retired citizens could be appointed to form the inspectorate.⁴⁴ It is expected that people will be more careful in their dealings and behaviour because they will know that they are liable to sudden inspections.

In the rich countries which are rendering considerable help in the fight against disease, hunger, poverty and misery in Africa, the general public has begun to be quite sceptical about offers of their hard-won resources to aid the peoples of Africa simply because they are not always sure that these would reach their desired target, the ordinary man in the street.⁴⁵ The rich countries are becoming aware of the role they have

⁴² Armah Ayi Kwei, *The Beautiful Ones are not yet Born*, p. 11.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 22.

⁴⁴ Bentsi-Enchill Kwamena, *Institutional Challenges of our Time*, p. 26.

⁴⁵ Awosika V.O., *An African Meditation*, p. 131.

played in the creation of an elite group in Africa. They have also been responsible for the alarming extravagance and prestigious and unnecessary projects in a number of African countries. Some of these projects serve to boost the ego of a Westerner or that of an African Westerner.

Soyinka has portrayed a picture of a nameless Managing Director of a foreign company, who is not only empty and corrupt, but sails aimlessly all over the world at his country's expense, collecting junk. Soyinka invents an idiom which suits him perfectly — 'a mixture of pomposity and just sub-standard English'. This is the image the African writer has of the man, who obviously is regarded as being very important by a foreign company with investments in Nigeria:

In the corner, an apoplectic radiogram, but no records, only the radio was ever used, and that just for the news. The radio had nine winking lights, all differently coloured, although no one had yet discovered what they proved. This was the pride of the Managing Director. On his visit to Germany on his eleventh round-the-world mission, the grandeur of the thing hit him on the apple and he could only mutter, 'It has class, it has class.' The sales *fräulein* complimented him on his taste and he paid on the spot with travellers' cheques. 'By the way', he said, 'do come to my hotel and show me how it works.'

'Aren't we to ship it home for you, sir?' 'Of course, of course', said the Director. 'I mean come with the leaflets, and explain it all to me; I don't read German, you see!'

'It is there in English also', said the girl, 'and in French and Spanish and Arabic.' Dragging his long trail of traditional splendour after him the Director turned to his private secretary and said, 'Aren't these German girls stupid?'⁴⁶

What the Director finds stupid in the German girl is quite obvious, and Soyinka's irony is striking here. The thought of the masses of people who suffer from starvation placed against this stupid extravagance in the use of state funds coming into the country either as aid or investment is shattering.

D. BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION AT ELECTIONS

Africans have written extensively on corruption and bribery at elections. This kind of bribery and corruption makes fun of the Western pattern of democracy that has been imposed on Africa.

Aluko tells a satirical story of Alade Moses, B.A., Dip. Ed. (University of London), headmaster of the Grammar School, who, while he is in London on a visit organized by the British Council, is suddenly informed that he has been appointed a Minister in the Government of his country. He reluctantly becomes Minister of Works. It is soon evident that the elections were a fraud. Moses has to fight a by-election. His colleague,

⁴⁶ Soyinka Wole, *The Interpreters*, p. 75.

Gorgeous Gregory, tells him that he requires a sum of £12,000 to fight the by-election. When Moses protests that he is not prepared to bribe anyone, he is told that he does not have to bribe anyone. He will need nothing less than £6,000 legitimate election expenses. Gregory analyses the so-called legitimate expenses as follows:

'Here in Victoria I have three clerks and in Moyamba two. These are full employees. Salary is — er — £45 a month. That's £540 a year... Six months to the election I employ eight field officers. Local boys, Standard VI passed. Salary at £6 a month for six months — that's — er — £288: nearly £300. Add to that the cost of six Raleigh bicycles. Sulaiman let me have them cheap at £25 each. That £25 in six places. £150. This together with £300 makes £450. We pick up the existing — er — £900. We are now £1,350...

Then the money allocation to the wards and quarters, to various clubs and societies, through the village and ward heads, and the presidents and secretaries of the clubs. Allocation usually varies from £5 to £50, depending on the size and status of the body concerned. The money is not a bribe at all, contrary to the allegation of armchair critics who are very much removed from reality, and too conceited and prejudiced to really find out what's going on. It's money for feasting people. You see either once a week or once a fortnight these people meet, in the house of the village or ward head, or in the parlour of the president, to deliberate upon the affairs of their organization. At these meetings they take turns to feast themselves, consume keg after keg of palm wine — My God, how these people drink... If you want people to vote for you, they first have to accept you as a member of their ward or club. Your payment of £20 or so is for your representative to organize on your behalf the feasting of the club or society for one Sunday — their acceptance of you as one of them. You see what I mean?... All at your expense. All perfectly legitimate expenses.'⁴⁷

Mr. Gregory was a lawyer trained in Britain. He was quite conversant with the British Parliamentary system. His analysis explains the extent to which the British Parliamentary system has been modified to suit local conditions. The basic problem with the elections Mr. Gregory has just analysed is that they are neither African nor British. It still has to be proved if an authentic African system is not more democratic than the distortion of a British system. As Gregory says the crux of the problem and possible solutions cannot be detected by armchair critics who are very much removed from the situation and too prejudiced to find out what is going on. Aluko treats the question of feasting people from the point of view of the politicians who need their votes. The point of view

⁴⁷ Aluko T.M., *Chief, the Honourable Minister*. London, Heinemann, 1970, pp 165-168.

of the villagers on feasting and voting is given by Achebe. After the feasting the people sing praises to the man they are going to vote for, not for the goals he stands for, but for his willingness to share his wealth with them. In *The Voter*, the villagers were happy with themselves after the feasting and told themselves that they had underrated the power of the ballot paper before and should not do so again. The feasting needed to be supplemented with money tips given to all the villagers. Chief the Honourable Marcus Ike was not unprepared for this treat. He had drawn five months' salary in advanced, changed a few hundred pounds into shining shillings and armed his campaign boys with eloquent jute bags. A good number of villagers have come to believe that they have to be paid for their votes. Voting, which is a foreign practice to them, was introduced in a way that has led to this misconception. They find nothing wrong in their demanding monetary returns for their votes. Both voting and the use of money in this way are foreign to them. They openly tell the boys in the 'whispering campaign':

'We believe every word you say to be true', said Ezenwa.

'We shall, every one of us, drop his paper for Marcus... Tell Marcus he has our papers, and our wives' papers too. But what we do say is that two shillings is shameful!... Yes, two shillings is too shameful. If Marcus were a poor man — which our ancestors forbid — I should be the first to give him my paper free, as I did before. But today Marcus is a great man and does his things like a great man. We did not ask him for money yesterday; we shall not ask him tomorrow. But today is our day.'⁴⁸

Another corrupt practice in the election campaign is that of oath taking. After paying and feasting people the election campaigners administer oaths secretly to people to force them to vote for them.⁴⁹ The people are forced to promise before God that they will vote for the said candidate and that if they fail to do so they wish to die a violent death with no sons and daughters to mourn their death.

The attitude of the villagers to the election campaigns is that the politicians are big and rich men who can afford to pay for the support people give them. In *Chief, the Honourable Minister*, Dauda, leader of the opposition, reveals in his election campaign that a school teacher earning £390 before election earns £3,000 as Minister of state.⁵⁰ From this revelation and also from the prestigious way in which political leaders

⁴⁸ Achbe Chinua, 'The Voter', *Girls at War*, London, Heinemann, 1972, p. 14.

⁴⁹ Aluko T.M., *Chief, the Honourable Minister*, p. 192. Here is an example of an oath: 'It is I, so-so-and-so, calling, oh Owari. If on the day we are to elect a man to speak for our town in the big meeting at Victoria I do not cast my vote for Moses then my day will be as black as night. My way will be as bushy as the thickest forest. May my house become desolate and be overgrown with weeds. May I die a violent death with no sons and daughters to mourn my death!'

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 189.

live, people get the impression that they can afford the so-called legitimate election expenses.

During the by-election of Alade Moses, Lola, a civil servant trained in the United States of America, voted five times. She visited five polling stations. At each station she had voted under a different name, and at each station she had cast not one vote but several. Aluke gives a detailed description of an election rigging method.

Each vote was bought from the registered voter for 10/-. 5/- was paid at the conclusion of the bargain, usually a few days before election day. On election day the voter went to the polling station at which his name was on the register. After going through the process of being checked in by the polling staff, he was given a ballot paper which he was to take inside the polling booth and drop inside one of the two boxes on which was pasted a picture of the candidate for whom he wished to vote. But the bribed voter dropped his ballot paper in his pocket. He then went out as if he had cast his vote as a good citizen. Some hundred yards away he entered a house owned by a party supporter. A trusted party supporter would now keep well hidden in the inner-most pockets of his clothes all these ballot papers and then sally forth ostensibly to go and cast his vote. He did more than just cast his vote. He dropped in the box of a party candidate all the ballot papers that had been illegally acquired.⁵¹

For indulging in this ingenious election fraud the ruling party members told themselves that they were justified because they were in possession of information of a very secret nature that the Opposition had received a very large sum of money from a foreign Government through trade union channels. The money was for trade union organization but the Opposition party were using it to subvert the government and to fight elections.⁵² This is another example in which the involvement of foreign interests, or the fear of the involvement of foreign interests, has encouraged bribery and corruption.

In spite of all these political problems that the Africans are having, the ex-colonial masters still expect Africans to value the Western model of democracy with which Africans have been experimenting since independence. The attempts by political scientists at defining and analysing corruption and bribery in the Third World have not succeeded since they are based on Western norms:

The very fact that corruption in the Third World has so far been mainly analysed by Western scholars makes me suspicious as to the validity of these analyses. Because the conclusion one must draw from the causal relationship they establish between modernization and corruption, is that modernized Western societies are more or less uncorrupt. I should greatly hesitate to subscribe to any

⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 197-198.

⁵² Ibid., pp. 183.

such conclusion. In our highly sophisticated and materially wealthy societies corruption may be just as prevalent as elsewhere, only less visible. I believe that it is essentially for reasons of poverty that corruption shows more in developing nations. Mere visibility means higher vulnerability, but is no indication for either the quantity or the quality of corruption in any society.⁵³

E. THE CONCEPT OF SELF-COLONIZATION

The disillusionment of the Africans with their independence is partly attributable to the fact that some Africans realize that they are in a way self-colonized. Our interviews proved that it is difficult for a people to admit this; some African writers, however, as well as some young scholars, regard malpractices by politicians as tantamount to self-colonization.

Awoonor points out that the African elite have let their people down. He discusses some of the failures of the elite which leave the African in the same position in which he was during colonial times even though these may not be regarded as corruption. He speaks of ministers acquiring 'twenty-three houses', politicians in evening dress holding banquets in International Dining Clubs, young African scholars speaking Latin and Greek, the emancipated African academics debating the question of academic freedom — freedom to think academically, 'to pursue intellectual work without let or hindrance — the university must be autonomous in the fullest sense of the word' and politicians talking about brotherly love and international understanding. Awoonor holds that there is nothing wrong with all these activities except that the reaction of the fleeced Africans is:

I am being sold into slavery a second time! By the gods of Africa I am being sold again. I came back after three hundred years. And ye gods of Africa, I am being sold into slavery a second time!⁵⁴

In this sense self-colonization or a repeat of slavery would mean the act of the politically liberated people subjecting themselves to foreign domination — culturally, economically and spiritually.

Awoonor traces similarities between the situation of an African who is being sold into slavery a second time to that of Christ, the carpenter, who was nailed to his own cross with nails and hammers from his own toolbox. The African is betrayed by the corrupt activities of the leaders as well as other activities which do not serve the interests of Africa. Those Africans whose hearts are in the West and who live according to a Western system of values are enslaving themselves as well as their

⁵³ Wemegah Monica, *Political Corruption and Modernization* (a seminar paper), H.E.I., 1973, p. 32.

⁵⁴ Awoonor Kofi, *This Earth, My Brother*, p. 164.

people. In *Why are we so Blest?*, Armah writes of Modin, an African student who is a typical example of Africans who are spiritually entrapped in the West. Modin, although an African absorbed into Europe, is trying to escape death, eager to shed privilege, not knowing how deep the destruction has eaten into himself, and hopes to achieve a healing juncture with his destroyed people.⁵⁵ Armah says the training a Modin type of African had was a careful apprenticeship for his becoming an accomplice in the murder of his people. This writer's reaction to self-colonization which is brought about by leaders who are trying to end colonization is definite.

What if you find inequalities within the struggle to end inequality? Degrees make kind; inequalities tending to justice are better in the end than injustice feeding existing injustice.⁵⁶

To combat self-colonization after political independence the African, Awosika asserts, must be reborn to think again and to develop a new intelligent and realistic sense of values of his own. This nascent African must be able to know exactly when he must admire, or ignore the exuberances and excesses of a world which is outside his own context:

If the peoples of Africa can have their own distinctive values; if they can define for themselves their own needs and adhere to these; if they can know exactly when their peoples have been well fed, well housed, well clothed, well adorned, well entertained; being fully conscious of what they need as a people and what they can best afford, from their own resources and reserves, they are likely to feel happy and contented and accept their lot as their lot; they can then surge forwards together as a nation.⁵⁷

According to this author, for the survival of the African and for the restoration of his dignity, the African will have to rely on his own efforts and his own sacrifices. This will mean a clear break with the past colonial strings. Some Africans, like the Black Renaissance. Movement of Nigeria, believe that the path to black emancipation lies through a rapid economic development of the African continent based on a co-ordinated use of natural and human resources. Other writers are of the opinion that the African toddler must first remove its tiny feet from the huge shoes imported and left behind by colonialism; it is only after this that she will really crawl, walk and then run. Corruption, bribery, self-colonization and other malpractices are born of the failure of the African to realize who he is and what his needs are. The cultural identity movement seeks to emancipate the African from economic exploitation as well as from the self-imposed enslaving tendencies and practices.

⁵⁵ Armah Ayi Kwei, *Why are we so Blest?*, p. 232.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 115.

⁵⁷ Awosika V.O., *An African Meditation*, p. 212.

F. THE PEOPLE'S DESPAIR AND HOPE

What stands in the way of attempts to teach economically insecure, poverty-stricken and psychologically frustrated people the meaning of democracy and the new development schemes of self-reliance is despair. Assimeng has given an analysis of the poor people's despair:

'And do people want to do politics again? Don't they have work to do? Perhaps they will get something better out of it. What did we villagers get from politics? The same roads, the same water, the same poverty — these are still with us, are they not? . . . Frankly, if any politicians wants me to vote for him, well, he should bring me some money. After all, what shall I get from him when he has won and gone to parliament? He won't even remember me until the next round of electioneering campaign.'⁵⁸

The general attitude of apathy towards bribery, corruption and changes in Africa are explained here in terms of the people's disillusionment with politics.

Armah describes a sweeper who starts his work already tired and asleep, and almost walking in his sleep. The smile that this 'sleepwalker' gives comes 'straight from the dead'. This worker joins the increasing number of people who have decided that they are so deep in despair that there is nothing worse to fear in life. The workers have been convinced of the final futility of efforts to break the mean 'monthly cycle of debt and borrowing, borrowing and debt'. Nothing is left beyond the necessity of digging oneself deeper and deeper into lifeless holes.⁵⁹ Similarly the clerks hurry away from their offices at the end of the day. This is an instinctive hurry which comes from years of disappointment and so much knowledge of the futility of working. Armah's apt description of the march of rows of people in despair is very striking:

They are going, just going, and I am going with them. I know I would like to be able to come out and see where we are going, but in the very long lines of people I am only one. It is not at all possible to come out and see where we are going. I am just going.⁶⁰

This is a physical description of the helpless situation of despair which corrodes the hearts of the people even as individuals. The loss of confidence in the leaders as well as the people's inability to determine the direction in which they should go has brought about utter despair. Awoonor's representation of the common people's attitude to the post-independence problems is as follows:

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 209.

⁵⁹ Assimeng Max, 'Politics and Ideological Portraits', *The Legon Observer*, Vol. IV, Nos. 13-26, 20th June 1969, pp. 7-8.

⁶⁰ Armah Ayi Kwei, *The Beautiful Ones are not yet Born*, p. 25.

"There's only one possibility: Despair and Die."⁶¹

There are some Africans who ask themselves whose victory they were celebrating when they marched up and down the streets at the attainment of independence. They now see victory as being an identical twin of defeat.

The 'man' who is Armah's voice gets worried when he learns that a new kind of car he sees in Africa is a Japanese car, the Toyota. As he congratulates the Japanese, he laments over the fact that everybody seems to be making things except the Africans. All the Africans are doing is to buy expensive things.

Armah also explains why and how some of the well-meaning foreigners who offer help in Africa get disillusioned. Koomson, an M.P., tells a story of the disappointment of a professor who was brought to Africa to give the Ministers, the Parliamentarians and the Party activists a lecture on Development and Economics. As the professor spoke most of the M.Ps including Koomson were asleep. Those who were half-awake were inattentive as they were impatient to revive their drunkenness after the lecture. The Attorney General, who was also drunk, proposed the vote of thanks and said in a drunken voice:

'You have told us, Professor So-and-so, of the stages of growth. We thank you very much for having told us about your speciality. Now we shall share our special knowledge here with you. We present the stages of booze.'⁶²

The feeling of African intellectuals in Ghana, as given by the editor of the *Legon Observer*, in reaction to the 1965 Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Trade Malpractices in Ghana, and the Auditor General's report of 1971, was one of utter despair. These reports exposed political corruption and the failings of the politicians. According to the editor's analysis of the report there was, however, room for an optimistic expectation that the next lot of leaders would be better than the previous one, because certain lessons would have been learnt.⁶³ This is the idea that lies behind the title of Armah's book, *The Beautiful Ones are not yet Born*. Even though the theme of despair runs through the whole novel, the end has this optimistic note that the next lot of politicians or the lot after the next, will be better.

Writing on the hard times during the last days of Nkrumah's regime in Ghana, Professor Jones-Quartey says:

Meanwhile, we are depressed by trends, signs, ceremonies and things; but we are not in despair. We, none of us, would have preferred 'slavery in tranquility' to 'freedom with danger', to graft corruption, waste, flamboyance, pusillanimity, nepotism,

⁶¹ Ibid., pp. 86-87.

⁶² Awoonor Kofi, *This Earth, My Brother*, p. 116.

⁶³ Armah Ayi Kwei, *The Beautiful Ones are not yet Born*, pp. 155-157.

repression, and the rest of that scary company. These are universal human weaknesses, and timeless withal.

Well — no pontification here, no predictions, no certainties. Some fear, yes; much alarm sometimes, often madness, sadness, and worse.

But also — much HOPE!⁶⁴

There are certainly reasons for the people's depression. Their hope is basically that a new system of control and development with the necessary constitutional checks and balances will emerge in Africa. Their 'freedom with danger' is 'to give birth to a new brand of leaders — 'the beautiful ones'.

⁶⁴ *The Legon Observer*, Editorial, Vol. VI, 2nd December 1971, p. 2.

⁶⁵ James-Quartey, K.A.B., *Kwame Nkrumah* (mimeographed, undated), Institute for Adult Education, University of Ghana, p. 7.

CHAPTER III

IMAGES ON RELIGION

A. OPPOSITION TO THE WHITE MAN'S RELIGION

African writers maintain that Africans were opposed to the white man's religion from the very beginning. Many Africans were suspicious of the arrival of the missionaries. The conversion of a few Africans to the new religion was a source of great sorrow to the leaders of the clans. Many leaders believed that 'the strange faith and the white man's god' would not last in Africa. At first all the converts were outcasts, worthless and empty men who were called 'efulefu'. Achebe says the imagery of an 'efulefu' in the language of the Igbo clan was a man who sold his matchet and wore the sheath to battle.¹

Chielo, the priestess of Agbala, called the converts the excrement of the clan, and the new faith was a mad dog that had come to eat it up.²

To begin with the African leaders underestimated the influence of Christianity. This attitude explains why Africans tolerated the introduction of the 'strange faith and the white man's god'. There could not have been religious wars in Africa at the introduction of this new faith because the conversion of the cowards and worthless people was taken as good riddance to the African society. When, later on, worthy people and men of title joined the church, the converts were regarded as having been led astray. At this stage, when the Africans might have resisted the white man's incursions into their traditional life, they realized that the new faith had been backed by the strong white governments. Stories were already gaining ground that the white man had not only brought a religion but also a government:

It was said that they had built a place of judgment in Umuofia to protect the followers of their religion. It was even said that they had hanged one man who killed a missionary.³

Aluko says the colonial governments showed preference for the new religion. When the Africans tried to oppose the new faith they were told that it came from the white man's country and was his religion:

¹ Achebe Chinua, *Things Fall Apart*, London, Heinemann, 1958, p. 130.

² Ibid., p. 130.

³ Ibid., pp. 141-142.

In that case the villagers could not drive away the village Christians without exposing themselves to the anger of the white man.⁴

Achebe discusses the technique which was adopted by some missionaries on realizing that it was difficult to introduce the Christian faith in Africa. For instance Pastor Brown learnt a good deal about the religion of the clan and he came to the conclusion that a frontal attack on it would not succeed. As it was the case elsewhere, Pastor Brown built a school and a little hospital. The villagers were begged to send their children to school. The children were encouraged with gifts of singlets and towels.⁵ Even though at first, villagers sent only their slaves or sometimes lazy children to school, these schools produced good results in aid of Christianity. As religion and education went hand in hand, the white man's religion was soon regarded as superior since it had educated African adherents. Achebe's evaluation of the achievement of the religious education is as follows:

The white man's medicine was quick in working. Mr. Brown's school produced quick results. A few months in it were enough to make one a messenger or even a court clerk.⁶

These educational advantages had a price tag: to pray or to remain illiterate was the simple alternative. The gifts that were used to attract Africans both to school and to church are regarded by some writers as having been bribes:

We found them and their sermons unattractive and boring; but still we went and listened to them because, at the end of each religious service or lecture, they distributed dresses, bottles of kerosene, heads of tobacco.⁷

Aluko also takes up the idea that Africans have always found Christian services unappealing. In *Kinsman and Foreman*, Titus, an African intellectual, declares that he has always found the prayers and responses at the services at All Souls Anglican Church tedious and monotonous. He refers to the singing by the pastor in a single musical note of the three prayers of the creed. Titus tells of how exciting an experience it was for him to worship with a free African group. At one time they were all on their feet and he noticed that they were all barefooted. They all sang at the top of their voices. They clapped their hands and swayed their hips in unison with the rhythm. The effect on Titus was tremendous. This was a religious song with a difference. It produced in him a completely different effect from what he was used to in the white-run church. He felt it was worship in a true African setting.

⁴ Aluko T.M., *One Man, One Wife*, London, Heinemann, 1967, pp. 97-98.

⁵ Achebe Chinua, *Things Fall Apart*, p. 163.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 162.

⁷ Nzekwu Onuora, *Blade among the Boys*, London, Heinemann, 1962, p. 85.

Mechanically, he removed his own shoes and joined the singing and the clapping of hands.⁸

In Munonye's novel, *Obi*, Willie is reported to have been saying very uncomplimentary things about white men in general, and the missionaries in particular. When Anna, Willie's sister-in-law who was a Christian, objected, Willie replied:

'Of course I'm not surprised', he went on smiling obstinately. '“Religion is the opium of the people.” That's what a certain wise man said. I would amend that: it's the opium of women. Anyway, when we begin to rule ourselves...'⁹

Willie's denunciation of the missionaries and the Church does not mean that he himself is not a Christian or a religious person. He does not challenge biblical teachings. He wants his own African religion:

Willie promptly asked the speaker to count him out. 'I don't belong to your imported religion', he said. 'I want our own African Church.'¹⁰

Soyinka's rejection of Christianity and his preference of traditional religion also shows that, given a choice, some Africans — even western-trained ones — prefer traditional religion to Christianity.

In his *Spear* interview, Soyinka says that although he was born a Christian, 'I am no longer a Christian. I rejected Christianity a long time ago. It did not correspond to my attitude to life... Traditional religion has a deeper meaning for me.'¹¹

The type of religion which was brought to Africa is rejected by some Africans because it does not correspond to the African way of life. In some African circles Christianity is still regarded as a white man's religion which corresponds with the white man's way of life. It is only logical that the rejection of the one should include a rejection of the other. Djoletto, a poet from Ghana, expressly asserts that 'the conflict is not with God' but 'with the word and the servant':

The conflict, if any, is not with God.
I cannot have a quarrel with force
I have been trying much to understand.
It is, then, with the word and the servant.
Of the servant and the word, I prefer
The word to which, in freedom, I refer.¹²

⁸ Aluko T.M., *Kinsman and Foreman*, London, Heinemann, 1968, p. 71.

⁹ Munonye John, *Obi*, London, Heinemann, 1969, pp. 50-51.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 24.

¹¹ Maccani Robert A., *Traditionalism in the Work of Wole Soyinka*, M.A. Thesis, Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, p. 47. (*Spear*, May 1966, p. 19.)

¹² Djoletto Amu, 'The Quest', Awoonor Kofi and Adali-Morthy G, ed., *Messages: Poems from Ghana*, London, Heinemann, 1971, pp. 109-110.

If there is a religious conflict at all in the African quest for identity it is more 'with the servant' than 'the word.' To an African the quest for identity is part of the quest for God. In *The Search*, Djoletto admits that instead of God he has found man-made institutions which are foreign to him:

I who have sought God,
Have won the Church.
I who have sought social justice,
Have won the glory of politics.
I have taken the bread
And missed the sweet honey.¹³

Very often conflicts arise when people become preoccupied with trappings of God and social justice. In his dismissal of the 'servant' Djoletto pleads for religious freedom. He prefers to refer to 'the word' and to God in freedom. The Christian missionaries are accepted as servants of god all right, but in an African situation they become as 'foolish' as Africans would be in a European setting. In *Things Fall Apart*, Achebe tells of a religious quarrel which arose between the Christian missionaries and the spirits and leaders of Umuofia. When the people of Umuofia were asked to leave their grievances in the hands of the white man, they objected and said:

'We cannot leave the matter in his hands because he does not understand our customs, just as we do not understand his. We say he is foolish because he does not know our ways, and perhaps he says we are foolish because we do not know his. Let him go away.'¹⁴

After making this explanation, the people of Umuofia asked the missionary to stay with them if he liked their way of life. He was given the freedom of worship:

'You can stay with us if you like our ways. You can worship your own god. It is good that a man should worship the gods and the spirits of his fathers.'¹⁵

Underlying the apparent religious conflict is the fact that the European way of life is different from that of the Africans. Some Africans endorse the fact that they, as a people and as individuals, are essentially religious. As evidence of the fact that there are some Africans who do not reject the 'word' outright, Ojukwu's policy statement for the Biafra Revolution is enlightening.

Our new society is rooted in Christian ethics.¹⁶

¹³ Ibid., p. 110.

¹⁴ Achebe Chinua, *Things Fall Apart*, p. 172.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 172.

¹⁶ Ojukwu Emeka, *The Ahiara Declaration*, Geneva, Markpress, 1969, p. 35.

From our sources there is no evidence that all Africans reject Christianity in toto. All we have found is that most Africans prefer their own traditional religion or Christianity freely interpreted and adapted by Africans in their own setting.

B. WESTERN CULTURE AS INTRODUCED IN AFRICA THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF THE CHURCH

Both Africans and Westerners are agreed that the Christian missionaries were the best sellers of Western culture in Africa. Discussing an international church conference, Dr. Sovik writes:

A partner in the Western penetration, the churches, particularly the Protestants, brought more than an other-worldly word of salvation clothed in Western thought patterns of these traditional societies. Influenced not only by the Renaissance and the Reformation but also by Wesley and the continental pietists the missionary movement brought, wherever it went, three institutions: the congregation, the school and the hospital. Less self-consciously it also brought with it a tacit or explicit attack on the traditional social structure, and the promotion of individualism, support for capitalism and the market economy, and the exaltation of the Western way of life, which was almost always supported by a crass racism and lack of comprehension of the local religious and social values.¹⁷

Nzekwu, in his two novels, *Blade among the Boys* and *Wand of Noble Wood*, directs his protest at the missionaries who undermined the continuity of cultural tradition in Africa. Achebe also discusses the death of the old beliefs. Christian Harvest Festivals were to replace the so-called pagan yam festivals:

Thereafter any yam... in the man's field was harvested in the name of the son.¹⁸

Anything outside the missionaries' theological conception was deemed to be heathen and reprehensible. When a young hero is, for example, caught playing in the village orchestra at a non-Christian funeral, he is caned by the priest for 'participating in things idolatrous'.¹⁹ African writers ridicule the refusal of the missionaries to accept any element of African culture as legitimate.

Fafunwa describes with great feeling how religious propaganda during the colonial era was a weapon to discourage African culture. He says early Christian missionaries genuinely but naively believed that their mission was to 'convert African pagans and muslims' to Christianity and thus bring light to the 'benighted' Africans. The early Christian attitude

¹⁷ Sovik Arne, *Salvation Today*, Minnesota, Augsburg Publishing House, 1973, p. 22.

¹⁸ Achebe Chinua, *Arrow of God*, London, Heinemann, 1964, p. 287.

¹⁹ Nzekwu O., *Wand of Noble Wood*, London, Heinemann, 1961, p. 85.

presumed that the African's own religions were inferior and should be ruthlessly eliminated. The missionaries in collaboration with local colonial administrators joined forces together in imposing their religion and culture on the African populace.

Indeed the 'good' citizen in most parts of Africa until very recently was one who was only African in blood, Christian by religion and British or French in culture and intellect. He must shun things African such as images, artefacts, local attire, African mores and customs — all in the name of Christianity and Civilization. School textbooks, church sermons and other built-in educational devices were employed to drive the message home. The physical and psychological assault on African culture through religion and politics combined to produce in the African what is now commonly known as 'colonial mentality' or a sense of rejection of things African.²⁰

In *Danda*, Nwankwo tells how the Christian converts at first showed great enthusiasm, wore their Sunday clothes with pride and learnt all that was to be learnt. As the novelty wore off they lost interest and grumbled at some of the church rules which were to them irksome. They were forbidden to attend pagan rituals or take part in the pagan singing and dancing. People who were guilty of participating in the pagan practices would on their death not receive Christian burial.²¹

In some cases missionaries were expressly asked to preach the word of God and not to meddle in the affairs of the community. Alderman, in *Stranger to Innocence*, gives the missionary express instructions not to interfere with cultural traditions:

Reverend Mr. Adams, this is our town. We know its traditions, customs and habits of its people. These we intend to preserve. We accepted you with open arms, because we knew why you came here to build a church and spread the word of God. Well, we do not object to that. But we shall be a bit concerned, in fact very concerned, if you start meddling in the affairs concerning this town.²²

The Africans did not have an exclusive conception of their religion, and therefore welcomed anyone who wanted to spread the word of God so long as he did not meddle with their culture. After the missionaries had started attacking traditional beliefs and practices some Africans tried to resist. Agunwa deliberately uses the African habit of treating the words of a dying man with veneration. The dying father says to his son:

Complete everything and get yourself a wife. You are the only son and this big house will grow cold without children running

²⁰ Fafunwa A. Babs, *Education, Policy and Change*, International Conference on Cultural Diversity and National Understanding within West African Countries, 14-18 December 1970 (Institute of African Studies, University of Ife, Nigeria), p. 1.

²¹ Nwankwo Nkem, *Danda*, London, Heinemann, 1970, pp. 198-199.

²² Marshall Bill, *Stranger to Innocence*, Ghana Publishing Corp., 1969, p. 14.

about in it. You may even marry two, not minding what the Christians say. There is nothing as good as children you know. Without you, what would I have been? I would have just been thrown into the bush like a dead millipede after my death. That is all.²³

The missionaries are criticized for their interference with the African practice of polygamy because this reduces their child-bearing capacity. Aluko devotes the whole book to the problems brought about by the 'one man, one wife, one Christ, one Church' faith:

Above all, the new faith taught a very strange matrimonial doctrine — that to reach the highest level of Christianity, the last rung on the ladder to the Christian God's heaven, a Christian man must marry only one wife.²⁴

Africans did not only find monogamy a 'very strange' matrimonial doctrine, but they went further to question its biblical justification. It is interesting to note that quite a number of the Independent African Churches which broke away from the established white-run churches do not adhere to the 'one man, one wife' principle. The practice of monogamy was one of the major stumbling blocks to Africans embracing the Christian faith. Munonye argues that the bible does not prohibit the practice of polygamy:

'Our own church has nothing against any man who chooses to marry more than one wife... Did not the Holy Book ask us to increase and multiply?' went on the Apostle.

'It did, Apostle'.

'How many wives had the wisest man of ancient times?'

'A countless number, Apostle.'

The crowd murmured. The man must have been a very big chief, many said.²⁵

This writer draws a parallel between the African chiefs' practice of polygamy and that of King Solomon. The inference here is that Africans are as wise as Solomon when they go for many wives and that the love for children cannot be regarded as ungodly.

Aluko's view is that the African would rather accept the 'one man, one wife' rule as a great Western philosophy but not as a Christian doctrine. In *One Man, One Wife*, Jacob says that the monogamy philosophy is not bad because the white man propounds it in order to avoid woman trouble. When Jacob is experiencing woman trouble he says women are not good generally. He says: 'One man, two wives

²³ Agunwa Clement, *More than Once*, London, Longmans, 1967, p. 180.

²⁴ Aluko T.M., *One Man, One Wife*, London, Heinemann, p. 46.

²⁵ Munonye John, *Obi*, London, Heinemann, 1969, p. 166.

—two troubles. One man, three wives —three troubles'²⁶. Jacob contends that it is queer of the white man to turn his philosophy regarding marriage into a Christian doctrine. It is in this sense that the white man is ridiculed for his failure to distinguish between his own philosophy of life and God's precepts. The white man's cultural arrogance translates itself into Christian arrogance.

Achebe says that when the missionaries brought their own kind of marriage, they also brought the wedding cake, but it was soon adapted to suit the people's sense of drama. The bride and the groom were given a knife each. The master of ceremonies counted 'one, two, three, go!' The first to cut through the cake was regarded as the senior partner.²⁷ Achebe exposes the confusion that took place as Africans were trying to adapt Western culture to their own. In African culture there is no doubt as to who is senior between husband and wife. In the name of Christianity couples have to vie for seniority through the cutting of the cake. This adaptation is also symbolic of the Africans' desire to give credit to ability or efficiency.

In *Chike's School Days*, Achebe draws attention to how the white man's way of life alienated African Christians from their people.²⁸ For example, Sarah, a Christian, taught her children not to eat in their neighbours' houses because 'they offered their food to idols'. In this way she set herself against the age-old custom which regarded children as the common responsibility of all so that, no matter what relationship existed between parents, their children played together and shared their food.

Maccani's analysis, *Traditionalism in the Work of Wole Soyinka*, reveals that Christianity has 'fallen' completely into history. According to Soyinka's portrayal, all the sacredness has been rubbed off it; it has become only another secular device for power over others. Soyinka rejects the historical Christ:

'Even if I try, I just cannot write a poem about Christ. There is just no rapport.'²⁹

Some African writers see a clear distinction between the God of humanity and the God of the 'boreal nations'. They see some missionaries to have come to Africa to preach about the 'deus ex machina', and to make the Africans believe that it is only through that medium that they can have life.

As a result of this, many Africans forget about their own belief about the gods who live in the river, the tree, the stone, and the God who lives in every human being. The African God who

²⁶ Aluko T.M., *One Man, One Wife*, p. 129.

²⁷ Achebe Chinua, *No Longer at Ease*, p. 165.

²⁸ Achebe Chinua, 'Chike's School Days'—*Girls at War*, London, Heinemann, 1972, p. 35.

²⁹ Soyinka Wole, *Spear Interview*, May, 1966, p. 19 — Maccani Robert A., *Traditionalism in the Work of Wole Soyinka*, University of Ghana, p. 51.

listens to all kinds of African music, who admires the African's dancing and his laughter, is then substituted with the boreal God who dislikes the very thing that gives the African life and strength.

African music and dancing are associated with evil and sin!³⁰

This thorough description of the God many Africans reject also explains that Africans have a negative pull for this God. Since this God who is enthroned in the Western kingdoms dislikes everything African, the African identity movement has no choice but to reject the God of Western culture.

C. DUALISM

Some writers assert that Africans did not deserve the 'heathen' and 'pagan' tags which were given them by the Christian missionaries. As the previous section of our work reveals, Africans were wrongly called 'non-believers' since they had a traditional religion of their own. The missionary endeavours would have met with greater success had the assumption not been that the African was ignorant about God.

In *The Great Ponds*, Amadi describes the life of Olumba who was a successful and devout warrior. He says Olumba worshipped the gods of his fathers with a great zeal that shamed even the priests themselves. No sacrifices were too great to placate the most insignificant of his household gods. It was a favourite saying of his that he would rather fight the whole village single-handed than defy the weakest god.³¹ Africans believe in the almighty god and the smaller gods. There is communion between the gods and the spirits of the departed fathers. Africans, therefore, believe in life after death. In *Things Fall Apart*, Ani, the earth goddess and the source of all fertility, is shown to be playing a greater part in the life of the people than any other deity. She is the ultimate judge of morality and conduct and she is also in close communion with the departed fathers of the clan whose bodies have been committed to earth.³² Agunwa gives an example of the litany that was said to the earth goddess to welcome a son who had just returned home from work:

The remaining four nuts were handed back to the Ozo³³ man — the host — to break. He took it and began the blessing.

'Fellow men, we shall all live', he prayed.

'Earth goddess, hear', they responded while beating lightly on the ground to intimate this point further.

'Whoever plants, let him dig up and eat.'

'Earth goddess, hear.'

³⁰ *The Legon Observer*, Vol. V, 10th April 1970, p. 18.

³¹ Amadi Elechi, *The Great Ponds*, London, Heinemann, 1969, p. 25.

³² Achebe Chinua, *Things Fall Apart*, p. 33.

³³ 'Ozo' is an Ibo social rank.

'We shall give birth to sons.'

'Earth goddess, hear.'

'We shall give birth to daughters.'

'Earth goddess, hear.'

'We shall train them.'

'Earth goddess, hear.'

'When we are old, they will feed us.'

'Earth goddess, hear.'

'Whoever sees us with an evil eye, when he plants, may the flood sweep his mounds away. Whoever wishes us evil, may he break his fist on the ground. We are broody hens. We have chicks. We do not fly up. We look after our brood. We do not eye others with an evil eye.'

'This big headed thing that came home yesterday, he is yet a seed. If you wish that he germinates and grows to be a tree we shall ever be thankful.'

'Earth goddess, hear, he will grow to be like his stock', they concluded.

He broke the first kola.³⁴

After the breaking of the kola the ancestors are invited to share the kola and food with the guests. The gods are invoked during the family and village feasts mostly. On very serious occasions prayers are said directly to the supreme God. In *Ozidi*, Oreame prays to the supreme God, Oyin Tamara, on behalf of her son Ozidi.

Oreame: (She rushes him out into the shrine. Then she falls on her knees in prayer) Ay, Oyin Tamara, you who are mother
Of all mankind, moulder of earth, sky and sea,
I beseech you, is my child in the right
In this matter?³⁵

Prayers are also said at circumcision, the child naming, the washing of the hands, and at the harvest, marriage and funeral ceremonies. There appears to be no activity in African society that is undertaken without prayers being said. Clark demonstrates that almost every aspect of African life starts with prayer when, as part of his play, the story-teller appeals to the audience to produce seven young virgins to bear offerings to the gods of the sea, who are unseen spectators. As the story-teller explains, the sacrifice is made in order to placate the guests from the sea and to establish a bridge between the gods and the people. In order to get the audience to respect this traditionally African religious practice, the audience is warned:

... But you may as well know that opinion expressed by our principal player; he will not put up appearance in any show that

³⁴ Agunwa Clement, *More than Once*, London, Longmans, 1967, pp. 100-101.

³⁵ Clark J.P., *Ozidi*, London, Oxford University Press, 1966, p. 75.

looks down on tradition. You see, the oracle has warned him of a swift finish to the act if the programme is not followed properly, and he's nothing if not pious...³⁶

Some writers maintain that their belief in reincarnation is backed up by Christian doctrine. In *No Longer at Ease*, Ogbuefi Odogwu, the eldest man in the village, though not a Christian, was an occasional church-goer. His only criticism of the Christian worship service was that the congregation was denied the right to reply to the preacher in order to clarify some points. One of the things he liked particularly and understood was: 'As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end.'

'As a man comes into this world,' he often said, 'so will he go out of it... The Christians are right when they say that as it was in the beginning it will be in the end.'³⁷

Odogwu uses this Christian doctrine to support his belief that Obi is a reincarnation of his grandfather, Ogbuefi Okonkwo.

There are writers who describe the dualism in the religious practices of some African Christians. In Henshaw's *Jewels of the Shrine*, Okorie tells of his unhappy plight as a Christian in the following words:

You know, woman, when I worshipped at our forefathers' shrine I was happy. I knew what it was all about. It was my life. Then the preachers came, and I abandoned the beliefs of our fathers. The old ways did not leave me; the new ways did not wholly accept me. I was therefore unhappy.³⁸

Okorie is one of the many Africans who have been hit by a religious identity crisis. It appears that this type of identity crisis is more unsettling because religion is a unifying element of culture.

In reaction to a religious identity crisis some African Christians usually fall back to their traditional practices. In *Kinsman and Foreman*, Aluko tells of Joel who was an elder in the All Saints Church in Nigeria. In spite of Joel's membership of this church he still believed in witchcraft and in juju. He confessed going to the Ifa priest for professional consultation on matters beyond his immediate comprehension. Pastor Morakinyo also admitted that most of his congregation attended the church twice on Sunday and bible class once during the week. They prayed to the Christian God twice a day asking for this and that, but they secretly went to the Ifa priest and the Sango priest at night to ask for the intercession of the gods in matters for which their Christian faith did not appear to have an immediate answer.³⁹ Sunmonu,

³⁶ Ibid., pp. 1-2.

³⁷ Achebe Chinua, *Things Fall Apart*, pp. 52-53.

³⁸ Henshaw James Ene, *The Jewels of the Shrine — This is our Chance*, University of London Press, 1973, pp. 41-42.

³⁹ Aluko T.M., *Kinsman and Foreman*, p. 150.

the most famous professional diviner and juju-man in Ibala district confirmed that he was used to church-going members of the community coming to consult him at night over problems of employment, barrenness in women or witchcraft. As he was giving evidence in Simeon's case, elder Joel could not speak the truth because of his great fear of Oluode, the family god. In a comment which covers Joel and a number of Africans Christians Titus says:

Like all of them, his Christianity is only skin deep. He believes more in his Oluode who he thinks can cause him a violent death than in the God he goes to worship at church twice every Sunday. Pastor Morakinyo's fault, to my mind. He has painted the Christian God as a forgiving father, slow to chide and swift to bless.⁴⁰

Observation has also shown that in times of stress and strain even African pastors visit debias in privacy. Theological scholarship sometimes fails to prevail over traditional beliefs.

In Sutherland's *Edufa*, though an intellectual, Edufa sacrifices the life of his wife after being advised by the diviner that death is hanging over his life. Senchi chides Edufa, his friend, for his religious instability:

Senchi: (Sniffing) And I smell — what is it that I smell? Incence. (To Edufa) Say, have you changed your religion again? What are you practising now? Catholicism, spiritualism, neo-theosophy or what? Last time I passed through here you were an intellectual atheist, or something in that category. I wouldn't be surprised to see you turned Buddhist monk next time.⁴¹

Senchi accuses Edufa for changing his religion every so often. What Senchi takes for a change of religion, however, is only Edufa's dualism in his religious practice. Edufa is one of those African Christians who secretly accommodate non-Christian practices — according to a Western definition of Christianity. Achebe maintains that even before the African's acceptance of the white man's religion the Igbo people had a firm belief in the duality of things.

Nothing is by itself, nothing is absolute. 'I am the way, the Truth and the Life' would be meaningless in Igbo theology. They say that a man may be right by Udo and yet be killed by Ogwugwu; in other words, he may worship one god to perfection and yet fall foul of another.

Igbo proverbs bring out this duality of existence very well. Take any proverb which puts forward a point of view or a 'truth' and you can always find another that contradicts it or at least puts a limitation on the absoluteness of its validity.⁴²

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 171.

⁴¹ Sutherland Efua T., *Edufa*, London, Longmans, 1967, p. 28.

⁴² Achebe Chinua, 'Notes on Misunderstanding', *Beware Soul Brother*, London, Heinemann, 1972, p. 65.

It appears that even though an African Christian may be disturbed by his having to practise two religions simultaneously, Igbo theology condones the practice. This may be explained by the fact that the small deities are subject to the control of the supreme God. Allegiance to many junior gods may not disturb allegiance to the supreme God. The missionaries did not understand that the Africans worshipped one supreme God who was believed to be above all other gods. The Christian God that the missionaries brought over to Africa was already there even before their arrival. This is in keeping with the Christian doctrine of the omnipresence of God. Dr. Arne Sovik's book which discusses issues that were raised at the World Conference on Salvation Today, which was held in Bangkok, 29th December 1972 to 8th January 1973, reveals that the World Council of Churches is beginning to realize that instead of the different cultures being an obstacle to the spread of Christianity, they can be used as a means of bringing cultural groups under the influence of Christianity. The churches are now beginning to accept the principle of self-determination in religious matters:

Where is the mission field today? 'Faith no longer comes from the West', read a headline on a story about Bangkok. The slogan 'Mission on Six Continents' was headlined at another world mission conference in Mexico City in 1963. The idea of a white Christian West bringing the gospel to the pagan peoples of the less developed world dies hard.⁴³

D. THE DIFFERENT IMAGES AFRICANS HAVE OF CHRISTIANITY

The rivalry within the Christian Church divided African society into faction groups according to denominational affiliations. Nzekwu describes a scene in which denominational rivalry affected the children at school. The children arrive hopefully at a new Roman Catholic school for the first day's teaching. They are ordered to go to the opposite ends of the football field according to their parents' beliefs — the sheep and the goats of the Roman Catholic and the heathen. The priest then turns to the unbaptised, sinful group and announces:

'You non-Catholics, you'll go and try other schools in town... If you are keen on coming to this school then become a Catholic and come back for admission next year.'⁴⁴

The other denominations were also not innocent of this segregation. In *Danda*, Nwankwo describes the unfriendly relations between the two Christian missions in Aniocha. There was keen rivalry between them in the gathering of the new members. Each party usually concentrated on the babies. They would take them from their mothers, sometimes

⁴³ Sovik Arne, *Salvation Today*, Minnesota, Augsburg Publishing House, 1973, p. 65.

⁴⁴ Nzekwu Onuora, *Blade among the Boys*, p. 85.

by promising to educate them free, and baptise them, and in that way ensure that they belonged to their own group.⁴⁵

Munonye discusses at length the rivalry of the churches in Umodiobia. He says the Catholic Church was the first to arrive. The Anglican Church was next. The Holy Spirituals arrived last. Although the Spirituals were completely new in the area, they had already won a greater number of converts. The secret of their success was their music — their clapping, singing and dancing. Besides, they allowed their members to marry as many wives as they could afford. There were also several stories about how, merely by praying, they had made mothers of barren women.⁴⁶ He tells of how one day the Rev. J. J. Godson, of the New Apostolic World Christian Congregation, referred to Father George as the militant Irish fellow who looked as if he was going to burst into pieces at any moment and who wanted the whole of the continent of Africa for his church alone. As a new man in the place, Godson was as yet ignorant of the method of rival sects. He did not know that there were among his audience, or supposed converts, spies from the other churches in the area. One day when Godson sent his catechist to ask for some petrol from Father George, the catechist was sent off with a scolding:

‘Off at once, fellow. Tell that protestant, Devilson or whatsoever he calls himself, to protest against my petrol too.’⁴⁷

Africans find it surprising that these missionaries who behave in this way are still able to preach the gospel of love.

The African converts inherit religious discrimination from the missionaries, and theirs becomes even more vicious:

‘I saw two men in the afternoon almost at the point of blows. Ask me what for?’

‘Yes?’

‘God.’ When they had stopped laughing he went on: ‘One belongs to Fada’s church and the other to Siemes. The Siemes one said Fada’s church and Opiritualusi are the same. That annoyed the Fada’s man.’

‘He’s a fool then’, Uzonda pronounced. ‘Doesn’t Opiritualusi look like the white man they call Fada? Only that Fada is white. Their dress is similar.’⁴⁸

The similarity between the Catholics and the Spiritualists is that they both practise church segregation. At the level of Uzonda the Spiritualists are seen as the imitators of the white men. The implication here, however, is that anyone who does not see that the African-run Spiritualist church is similar to the white-run churches is a ‘fool’.

⁴⁵ Nwankwo Nkem, *Danda*, pp. 76-77.

⁴⁶ Munonye John, *Obi*, p. 8.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 53-54.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 170-171.

It does not take long for children to realize that they belong to different religious sects. Munonye describes an incident when Catholic and Anglican children, as they were walking to church, became conscious, in a practical way, of the fact that they belonged to rival groups. It all started with a sort of impromptu and open-air religious debate:

'You people are happy because your short Father has come back, and is visiting you today.'

'Why not?' retorted a Catholic boy. 'You better warn your pastor. If he doesn't behave himself Father will order him out as he did to the Apostolic man.'

'I hear you will receive communion today and have been starving for a week now.' Someone amended: 'They eat quite all right, but they rinse their mouth thoroughly so that Father can't find out...'

'Are you people serious when you say a woman gave birth to God?'

'Fool! Look at your pastor! He orders you to close your eyes for prayers and when you've done so he steals the church collection.'

'Yes, your Father tells you he's not married whereas he keeps his wife and children in his country.'⁴⁹

This debate could have ended in a religious battle if Joe had not intervened. Some of these very negative images about churches are held by children. What is striking is that as Africans embrace the Christian faith they become ardent members of a smear campaign against rival churches. Sometimes inter-denominational rivalries become so strong that Christians choose to associate with the so-called heathens rather than have anything to do with members of a rival denomination. Anna, Joe's wife, refuses to be admitted into the hospital of the Church Missionary Society of the Anglican mission because she is a good Catholic. By her refusal to be hospitalized by the nurses of a rival church, she plays into the hands of Marius, a cynic, who declares:

'Well, it's up to you', said Marius. 'As for me, I was brought up a Catholic but all churches are now one and the same, in that I don't go to any.'⁵⁰

African writers decry the fact that brothers fight one another sometimes and do not even attend one another's funeral or marriage just because they go to different churches. Religious rivalry has been one of the obstacles to family, tribal and even national solidarity in Africa. It is against this background that the African 'priest-doctor' in Munonye's *Obi*⁵¹ prays that the spirits should wipe out all churches from the land and reconcile brother to brother. The essence of this priest's prayer is that the country be purged of religious dissension which affects national unity. Fafunwa asserts that mission schools over a period of a hundred

⁴⁹ Ibid., pp. 56-57.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 181.

⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 58-59.

years or more succeeded in producing Baptists, Anglicans, Catholics and Muslims, but have not succeeded in producing Nigerians, Ghanaians, Kenyans, Togolese, etc. Instead they have helped to intensify endless rivalry and sometimes outright hostility among the various religious sects while the larger and more important issue of citizenship and national understanding are relegated to the background.⁵² In this respect the influence of religion on politics cannot be over-emphasized.

There are some Africans who, in their writing, show a preference for the African-run Spiritual churches. Tsaro-Wiwa of Nigeria says there are many churches in Aba, for example, the Salvation Army, the 'Christ Army which people normally call Chraisiamin', the Assembly of God Mission 'where people beat drums and dance', then there is the Catholic Church and many other small ones like 'for example, the Holy Spiritual Joyful Church of Mount Sion which is at our backyard'. In spite of the fact that the latter is a backyard church, the writer declares that he likes it because of 'its indigeneity'.

... 'for example, they sing like Nigerians. It is not like St. Michael's where they translate English songs into Igbo. And the pastor does not pretend that God sent him from Heaven to come and look after the members of the Church.'⁵³

The writer expresses an appreciation for the attempt of the Spiritual Churches to adapt their worship to African tradition. He openly says that he does not like the Anglican Church; he goes there only because he was born an Anglican. He also exposes base motives which determine the choice of denomination for some people.

... 'There is one other reason why I go to St. Michael's. There are always very many fine ladies there... I won't tell you a lie. I like women very much and when I saw them looking fine inside the church that day, I forgot about the prayer and the sermon very many times.'⁵⁴

For many Africans the choice of the church to which one will belong is not determined by doctrinal considerations. The religious differences and hostilities have their origin and importance in Europe. Djoletto makes reference to a group of Africans who go to church so that they may get a decent burial in a decent corner of a public cemetery that has been 'parcelled out to Christians, Moslems, pagans, foreigners, unidentified corpses, paupers and others'.⁵⁵ According to the partitioning of the graveyard the Christians are placed first in spite of the fact that humility

⁵² Fafunwa A. Babs, *Education, Policy and Change*, p. 2.

⁵³ Tsaro-Wiwa Kenule, 'High Life', *Africa in Prose*, London, Heinemann, 1969, p. 184.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 184.

⁵⁵ Djoletto Amu, *The Strange Man*, London, Heinemann, 1967, pp. 196-197.

is a Christian attribute. Awoonor illustrates how un-Christian Christian burial restrictions are:

Can they agree to bury him?

I will try.

Tailor came back at early morning, the sun was just rising over the Methodist Church.

They say they can't. He was not a member. What can we do?

Try the Presbyterians.

Tailor came back about ten, dripping sweat.

They say they can't — he is not baptized.

What can we do?

A deep silence hung around the house.

We must bury him today.

There is a pagan cemetery. I will try. He came back about three.

I have got a place for him.⁵⁶

The hypocritical attitude of the churches which segregate and condemn people of a different faith is exposed. It would appear that some Christians expect a denominationally segregated heaven. This is what segregated funerals suggest. Okara is of the opinion that the different names the churches have bring about division and strife. Okolo, who is in search of the meaning of life, tries to find the nameless truth — the 'it'.⁵⁷ He believes that everybody is looking for 'it' like the Christians, Moslems, and animists are groping along in their various ways trying to reach God.

What has contributed to the disillusionment of some Africans with Christianity is the fact that in some circles Christianity has been used as a business enterprise. In *The Interpreters*, Kola and Sagoe discuss one of the local prophets:

'It's good business these days, religion! . . . What else does he want? Publicity, of course. All the local prophets want publicity. It's good business.'⁵⁸

Even though the Spiritual churches are preferred by some Africans because their worship services are semi-indigenous, in very many cases these churches have been led by 'false prophets'. In Ekwensi's *Timber Money*, Jatife was shocked to find Mr. Kippa, a scoundrel, officiating in a religious festival. Mr. Kippa had not paid his rent for ten months and was a heavy drinker and smoker who had an eye for pretty women. By no stretch of the imagination could he be described as leading an exemplary life. All the same, Mr. Kippa was the chief priest of a religious organization. Membership conditions were rather mysterious but

⁵⁶ Awoonor Kofi, *This Earth, My Brother*, London, Heinemann, 1972, p. 73.

⁵⁷ Okara Gabriel, *The Voice*, London, Heinemann, 1970, pp. 111-112.

⁵⁸ Soyinka Wole, *The Interpreters*, London, Heinemann, 1972, pp. 162, 178.

observation showed that it had many beautiful women as members.⁵⁹ Mr. Kippa's religious organization turns out in the end to be a group of timber pirates.

In *The Trials of Brother Jero*, Amope announces that Brother Jeroboam is a thief of a prophet. Jeroboam also admits that he was born a swindler of a prophet and that he grew to 'like the trade'. He tells of how it has become fashionable for them to worship on the beach and how the prophets fight among themselves for worshipping sites there:

'Some prophets I could name gained their present beaches by getting women penitents to shake their bosoms in spiritual ecstasy. This prejudiced the councillors who came to divide the beach among us.'⁶⁰

Jeroboam reveals even the secrets of his success as a prophet:

'I am glad I got here before my customers — I mean worshippers — well, customers if you like. I always get that feeling every morning that I am a shop-keeper waiting for customers. The regular ones come at definite times. Strange, dissatisfied people. I know they are dissatisfied because I keep them dissatisfied. Once they are full, they won't come again... My disciple believes that I sleep on the beach, that is, if he thinks I sleep at all. Most of them believe the same but, for myself, I prefer my bed. Much more comfortable. And it gets rather cold on the beach at nights. Still, it does them good to believe that I am something of an ascetic.'⁶¹

Jeroboam uses Christianity as a kind of 'patent medicine' that he sells to cure all the worldly ills of his dissatisfied flock. He is not ashamed of his having to make business of his faith. His Christianity is a well-planned money-making concern. With his popular prophesies Jeroboam exploits not only the sick and the poor workers but he includes even the political leaders:

'One of my most faithful adherents — unfortunately, he can only be present at week-ends — firmly believes that he is going to be the first Prime Minister of the new Mid-North-East State — when it is created. That was a risky prophecy of mine, but I badly needed more worshippers around that time.'⁶²

⁵⁹ Ekwensi Cyprian, 'Timber Money', *Lokotown and Other Stories*, London, Heinemann, 1969, pp. 64-65.

⁶⁰ Soyinka Wole, *The Trials of Brother Jero — Five Plays*, London, Heinemann, 1964, p. 201.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 211.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 215.

Soyinka very ably shows how Christianity is used by some people who take advantage of the religious, economic and political instability that Africa is experiencing in the post-colonial era.

Djoleto associates Christianity with negative human attributes. In his description, the local pastor is said to have a mechanical and grave look. By repetition, Djoleto stresses the words 'grave' and 'mechanical'. The suggestion is that the pastor lacks life. The author is quick to point out, however, that the pastor's 'gravity' was a practised professional stunt because the church expected him to be 'grave'. This 'gravity' was imposed on the pastor by the institution for which he worked.

He had consciously learnt to look grave on all such occasions ... He had for a long time often been unable to support his gravity by a correct emotion. People were always dying and he had very wisely composed certain stock phrases which he delivered mechanically, but in a very consoling voice to suit the kind of person freshly bereaved.⁶³

Just as some aspects of Western culture, like the worship of money, are associated with death, Christianity is depicted as having importance in death scenes. It is obvious that the criticism is levelled more at the church than the pastor. The pastor has to adopt a mechanical stunt in order to qualify for his job. In a church situation human relations have to be more mechanical than natural. As a private person the pastor's human attributes are different. On serious scrutiny his face is said to have betrayed a 'curious mixture of cynicism, stubbornness, arrogance, sensuality and a distrust of anything new or mysterious, profound or radical'. It appears that this description of the pastor is meant to convey the shallowness of the Christian experience some Africans have. Djoleto's pastor is a symbol of negative images some Africans have of the Church. Christianity has encouraged people to lead double lives. In response to the demand that Christians should put up scenes and religious appearances, the pastor bans the wearing of lipstick and tight frocks to church. Any girl who does so is considered immoral or indecent, but to the girls' chagrin and frustration, the pastor dyes his grey hair black, pencils his eyebrows and uses women's powder. This is, indeed, a cartoon of the Christians' double standards of living.

Anger is expressed that in a Christian village far too many people are evil-doers and yet they try all the time to make others feel they are the evil-doers for whom God has reserved a special punishment. The village church bell-ringer is given as an example of a man who thinks that he is above others simply because he works for the church. The church bell-ringer is said to be a specialist in moral subversion because he plots the damnation of fellow Christians in the name and service of God:

⁶³ Djoleto, *The Strange Man*, p. 2.

I fear most of our religious people because they are the agents of moral subversion. They use it as a means of barren spiritual entertainment. We have either to satisfy them or be damned. They neither have to help us nor satisfy us because they think they are only responsible to God and have his backing. I don't know whom God backs, anyway; but they are happy, yes, cynically happy, when someone errs. Because of their shortcomings which they try to overlook, they are genuinely disappointed when someone tries to be good, . . . Everywhere you turn, there is moral subversion of some kind.⁶⁴

After showing how the church elders had as many moral weaknesses as non-Christians, Djoletto takes us to a prayer meeting of the elders where they all look as solemn as usual. This is how they have learnt to look whenever prayers are said. The catechist then says the prayer in a practised sonorous, mechanical voice. It is significant that most of the Christian characters are hypocrites.

Munonye's worship service scene is also very dramatic and revealing. At the beginning of the service, as the children are trying to find their seats and are shouting or crying in the process, the church wardens, all physically fit and armed with canes, are either hushing them, beating order into them, or even twisting their ears. Since Father George cannot stand any noise made inside a church, the church wardens work harder than before when the holy Father comes in to start the service. They swish their canes, shout threats and swearwords, and harass mothers with children in their arms.⁶⁵ What impresses Father George is artificiality and mechanical piety. The cruel discipline that the Father and the church wardens impose on the mothers and children is accepted as God's service. The church is associated with cruelty and maliciousness. Djoletto asserts that some of the mission or church-trained teachers are malicious, dangerous, heartless, wicked and impatient. The only effective method they use in training a child is the use of brute force. According to these teachers and church standards, the only good children are the ones who are docile, hypocritical and permanently cynical.⁶⁶ Mensa, who is considered a strange man by the Christians, rejects this moral code. He says:

I want my children to be free, bold, self-reliant and capable of changing the phase of that portion of the earth where they live. They may die in the process but what's wrong about such a death?

Convention and conformity are the foundation-stone of decadence.⁶⁷

The cruelty and brutality of the teachers is traced to the mission training they have had. One victim of the teachers' cruelty asks: 'Why

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 41.

⁶⁵ Munonye John, *Obi*, p. 60.

⁶⁶ Djoletto Amu, *The Strange Man*, pp. 60-61.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 61.

are teachers like that? Did God create them like that?' The reply to this question is as follows:

'My uncle tells me it's all the fault of the white missionaries, especially the German missionaries... although they were ministers, they could whip boys like slaves. For example, if a boy was sent to one of them for insulting his mother, he would strip the boy's backside naked and give him twenty-four lashes; then before he gave the twenty-fifth, he would shout, "And one more for the Kaiser!" And, thud, the boy got it.'⁶⁸

Djoleto says that to the religious school authorities any form of love affair whatsoever between a boy and a girl was the most sacrilegious offence ever committed since Adam and Eve were said to have put the entire world on a permanent evil footing, against which the Church had battled for several hundreds of years. It was a sure forecast that the boy or girl caught practising it was going to be in future the worst sexual degenerate whose relationship with the Church and with God was assuredly bound to be hopelessly unholy. Any boy or girl caught with a love letter was declared to have committed the first-degree offence known to the entire religious educational set-up, and the punishment that went with it was nothing short of wilful murder under the banner of the Christian crusade for the salvation of the soul which had no need of the body anyway.⁶⁹ Christian educationists are criticised for their ruthlessness in inflicting pain on others as well as for their narrow morality. Most of these early Christian educationists believe that the body has to be chastised in order to save the soul. These unpleasant associations with the church that some Africans have had in their early life explains, to some degree at least, their negative attitudes to Christianity in general.

Achebe pokes fun at the preoccupation of the Christian Church with external appearances. He explains how on some beautiful Sunday morning, as the villagers were streaming into church, an old woman suddenly cried out piteously at the church door: 'I forgot to wear my shoes.'⁷⁰ Apparently this old woman was not in the habit of wearing shoes, but she believed it imperative that she wore them on Sundays so that she would be able to communicate with God. One finds it difficult to believe that the God this woman worships is the same God who ordered Moses to remove his shoes for the place on which he stood was holy. Achebe then tells of how, as the sermon was being preached, he heard a 'snoring accompaniment emanating from a heap of Sunday clothes'. The owner of the Sunday clothes, however, was satisfied with the part he was playing in the worship:

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 173.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 131.

⁷⁰ Achebe Chinua, 'In a Village Church', *Girls at War*, London, Heinemann, 1972, p. 74.

He may be compared to undergraduates who go to the library for their siesta. The philosophy behind both actions is essentially the same. The religious atmosphere of the church blows through the minds of all worshippers, whether they are awake or asleep, looking at the preacher or at the nurses. In the same way, the library has its intellectual environment and breathes its knowledge on anyone within reasonable distance of the shelves.⁷¹

The church's preoccupation with appearances is also evident when villagers offer the lack of suitable garments as an excuse for not coming to church. In this way the church becomes a prestige society for displaying personal possessions and appearances.

Djoleto, however, suggests that to some people the church is like a travel agency. If you obey its rules and regulations, give out the money to keep it going, hold fast to its doctrines and, sinner or not, you automatically get a ticket to heaven.⁷²

Some Africans regard Christianity as the religion of the oppressors. In *No Longer at Ease*, Achebe describes the exploitation of Obi's parents by the church. After thirty years' service in the church Obi's father had retired on a salary of two pounds a month, a good slice of which went back to the same church by way of class fees and other contributions. He also had his two last children at school, each paying school fees and church fees.⁷³ Both parents were all bones since they did not have enough good food to eat.

Besides this oppression within the church, Christianity is seen as having served the large interests of the imperialist powers. Casely Hayford writes in his book, *Ethiopia Unbound*:

We shall go to the Ethiopians (Africans) and shall teach them our religion and that will make them ours, body and soul — lands, goods, and all, for all time. And the saying pleased them all.⁷⁴

This was when the nations of the world met on Mount Atlas to decide how to partition the land of Africa. Some Africans have set out to prove that the church missions were in fact an advance army of the British imperialist and that the real mission was to prepare the mind and keep the eye of the converted African on the blessings of the Kingdom in heaven while the British imperialist carried away the good things of the kingdom here on earth.⁷⁵ The African popular saying explains: 'When the white men came they had the Bible and we had

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 76.

⁷² Djoleto Amu, *The Strange Man*, p. 6.

⁷³ Achebe Chinae, *No Longer at Ease*, p. 55.

⁷⁴ Casely Hayford J.E., *Ethiopia Unbound*, London, Frank Cass, 1969, p. 158.

⁷⁵ Aluko T.M., *One Man, One Wife*, London, Heinemann, 1965, p. 29.

the land, and now they have the land and we have the Bible.' The inference here is that the African's acceptance of the white man's religion cost him his land, and that the missionary's association with the imperialists cost him his Bible. In *Kinsman and Foreman*, Aluko mentions in passing that some scholars of theology and of contemporary Christianity believe that the Second Coming of the Lord will be through a village in black Africa in order to demonstrate God's disapproval of racial discrimination:

It was also in appreciation of the fact that the black man was deeply religious and that it must be the Bandedes and Morakinyos of black Africa that must carry Christian revival back to sinful America and decadent Europe.⁷⁶

The author refrains from putting this assertion as his belief or a general African belief since this would amount to religious arrogance. The assertion, however, is an indication that some Africans do realize that their religious, just like their economic and political salvation will come from within Africa.

Agbeti in his manuscript on *African Theology*, shows that the traditional African experience of God is distinct from the Christian experience of God. He warns that African theology should be distinguished from Christian theology expressed in a way that is relevant to the African. Essentially the end result of relating Western Christian theology to an African situation is still Christian. The time has come, Agbeti points out, when specialists in African traditional religion should systematize traditional reflections on the Creation and the original State of Man, the Separation of God from Man, and eschatological concepts:

The value of this type of distinctive study of African religious concepts, without confusing them with Christian concepts, cannot be over-emphasized: The true theological interpretation of the traditional African religious experience could be a strong springboard from which the tottering Christianity of Africa today may be rescued and rooted more meaningfully in the African soil.⁷⁷

According to Agbeti, the Africanization of the Christian Church as well as indigenized Christian theology have not succeeded in grasping the African religious concepts, the understanding of which will clear up several paradoxes that characterize Christian living in Africa. This view is in agreement with the Lausanne Covenant which was signed by the participants in the International Congress on World Evangelization in July 1974. This Covenant states that culture must always be tested and judged by scripture and not by the standards of other cultures:

The gospel does not presuppose the superiority of any culture to another... Missions have all too frequently exported with the

⁷⁶ Aluko T.M., *Kinsman and Foreman*, London, Heinemann, 1968, pp. 198-199.

⁷⁷ Agbeti J.K., *African Theology: What it is*, unpublished manuscript, p. 8.

gospel an alien culture, and churches have sometimes been in bondage to culture rather than to the Scripture.⁷⁸

The fact that the views of some exponents of the African identity movement have the support of a new breed of Christian theologian augurs well for the future.

⁷⁸ The Lausanne Covenant, 'Evangelism and Culture', July 1974.

CHAPTER IV

THE SEARCH FOR POLITICAL CULTURE AND ADMINISTRATIVE

PATTERNS APPLICABLE IN AN AFRICAN SITUATION

The polarization of the world between antagonistic centres of power and two conflicting ideological camps has limited the choice of the new states towards an independent ideology. Many African writers decry the fact that European ideological control has remained in Africa even after the termination of European colonial rule. Africa is still being threatened from without by another scramble, an ideological one. The analysis which follows gives evidence that in the post-independence era economic and ideological problems have engaged the thoughts of some African elite. In their writing, Africans reject foreign ideologies and are starting to think out their own ideology and political system.

A. THE REJECTION OF FOREIGN IDEOLOGIES

At the granting of independence neither the new states nor the former metropolitan powers visualized the need for the new states to work out their own ideologies and patterns of administration and development. The metropolitan powers did everything to make sure that the new states adopted the policies and ideologies worked out by the mother countries. Sometimes this was even made a condition for the granting of independence. On the other hand, whilst there were many difficulties in the way of the new states severing ties with their ex-metropoloi, the more radical ones, such as Ghana, considered it their right to choose any one of the foreign ideologies. Capitalism associated with imperialism was denounced. At this stage the economic needs of the new states dictated that they either pretended to be neutral or openly fell in line with the political systems of the powers that offered them economic assistance.

An important question which arose was: 'What is the social philosophy, the working set of beliefs, the social goal by which our voyage of self-transformation is to be guided? Capitalism? Socialism? Communism? What?'¹

¹ Bentsi-Enchill Kwamena, *Institutional Challenges of our Time*, Accra, February, 1971, p. 14.

In the fourth series of the J.B. Danquah memorial lectures in 1971, Bentsi-Enchill posed this question, thereby rightly suggesting that until 1971 some African states had not answered this basic question. Reasons are given that make it a matter of urgency for Africans to decide on the ideological path they will follow:

This is a question that we must answer for ourselves as a matter of urgency. For as we know, or should know, the developed countries whom we are seeking to copy are not terribly happy places today, in spite of their economic viability, social amenities and advanced technology. They suffer from a disturbance of the spirit. Something seems to be going wrong with them.²

He goes on to explain that the developed countries have major social problems. Industrial conflict is rife. Crime, drug-addiction and violence are on the increase. Life is unsafe in many major cities. There is moral decay. The natural environment of air and water is being polluted and rendered unsafe. Governments seem unable to cope with a mounting storm of protest. Disenchantment and cynicism are widespread. Youth is in revolt. There is a jarring clash of ideologies.

After describing Western societies and their problems, Bentsi-Enchill makes a very strong case for Africans to reject foreign ideologies and to develop their own based on their cultural values:

This is perhaps the most important reason why we should reach into our own culture, if at all possible, for a framework of ideas and guiding principles that can be set to work in the modern context, rather than chase after the nuances of complex foreign ideologies like Marxist-Leninism, Maoism, Socialism and the rest.³

Bentsi-Enchill suggests that an African ideology should make the family a fertile quarry for the development of an adequate and satisfying 20th-century social philosophy. In this way he suggests that there is something in Nyerere's communalism (although Nyerere has not used this term) which draws from African traditional heritage the recognition of 'society' as an extension of the basic family unit.⁴

In Awoonor's novel, *This Earth, My Brother*, communists are rejected on grounds that they are racists and hypocrites just like the capitalists:

And they say they have no colour bar. Hypocrites. All Communists are hypocrites, just like the capitalists! Long live Africa!⁵

² Ibid., p. 14.

³ Ibid., p. 15.

⁴ Atimono Emiko, 'The Contribution of Julius K. Nyerere to Africa's Political Awareness', *Présence Africaine*, 1947-1967, 'Mélanges', Paris, 1969, p. 350.

⁵ Awoonor Kofi, *This Earth, My Brother*, London, Heinemann, 1972, p. 136.

The Africans' major objection to both communism and capitalism is that they are both imperialistic. They are un-African and are both used as a means of dominating others. Awoonor recalls the days of Khrushchev, which were supposed to be the days of Soviet-African solidarity. He maintains that in spite of all the declarations to this effect the communists are imperialists. Their interest in Africa is just a stunt in the game of the power struggle between the East and the West.

On the train from Leningrad, Alexander Ivanovich Yuravel, who agreed when I said his name meant a vulture and an eagle in a simultaneous breath, wept bitterly when I said, 'You Russians are no different. You are like the imperialists.' He wept on behalf of the party and the Central Committee, and of the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.⁶

Alexander Ivanovich Yuravel's name symbolizes the greed and the acquisitiveness of both the capitalists and the communists. Like vultures, the communists prowl over looking for carcasses to devour. The imagery of an 'eagle' and a 'vulture' is indicative of the African view that capitalism and communism, like the birds of prey, depend on the exploitation of smaller and weaker nations for their existence.

Some writers express very bitter feelings against the practice of capitalism in independent Africa. Armah talks of the irony of African leaders who practise capitalism and chase after the enslaving things of Europe despite the fact that they were given power to reward them for their shouting against capitalism and imperialism. The African capitalists are said to be nothing different from the old African chiefs who sold their people for the trinkets of Europe. In *The Beautiful Ones are not yet Born*, the man is surprised after shaking hands with Koomson, the Socialist Party's M.P. Koomson's hands are flabby and soft:

Ideological hands, the hands of revolutionaries leading their people into bold sacrifices, should these hands not have become even tougher than they were when their owner was hauling loads along the wharf? And yet these were the socialists of Africa, fat, perfumed, soft with the ancestral softness of chiefs who have sold their people and are celestially happy with the fruits of the trade.⁷

Armah describes the schizophrenic behaviour of some African politicians who, by word of mouth, denounce capitalism and embrace socialism, whilst in fact they are very much captured by the capitalist system. Mr. Koomson has many thousands of pounds in a poor corner of Africa. He declares that he is one of the owners of the Commercial Bank. Estella, Koomson's wife, is sorry that the M.P.s are not allowed to use their wives' names for registering their business since it spoils the party's

⁶ Ibid., p. 84.

⁷ Armah Ayi Kwei, *The Beautiful Ones are not yet Born*, London, Heinemann, 1969, pp. 153-154.

name.⁸ The behaviour of these leaders betrays their supposedly socialist sentiments.

After a youth spent fighting the white man, why should not the president discover as he grows older that his real desire has been to be like the white governor himself, to live above all blackness in the big old slave castle? And the men around him, why not? ... All the shouting against the white men was not hate. It was love. Twisted, but love all the same. Just look around you and you will see it even now. Especially now.⁹

The post-independence capitalism practised 'even now' and 'especially now' that Armah speaks of, is there to be observed in practice even during the second decade of independence.

Bentsi-Enchill asserts that there are Africans, even in the nineteen-seventies, who are devoted to the ideologies of liberalism and capitalism, of socialism and communism and mixtures of these:

In recent years various African leaders have attempted to enunciate doctrines of African socialism, some intelligible, others, like consciencism, quite esoteric, and beyond the understanding of the common man to whom they should have been addressed. There are many, today, who would say — away with these endless disputes about these 'isms', let us simply get on with the job. This latter attitude, however, is a deceptive and dangerous one; for it is an invitation to go to sleep, to stop thinking about purpose and methods.¹⁰

A simple throwing away of foreign ideologies, Bentsi-Enchill asserts, just like their adoption, is no answer to the problems of Africa. He holds that some of the doctrines of African socialism are so abstract that they have no bearing on the problems and needs of the common African today.

Iddirisu, who maintains that Africans can also develop their own ideology if they are serious, is against the preaching of a foreign type of ideology for Ghana. These ideologies are not universal as the ex-metropolitan powers arrogantly believe. They are propounded by people to suit their own human and natural environmental conditions. They may therefore not be adapted to the local cultural framework. In the case of Ghana, as Iddirisu observes, foreign ideologies have repeatedly proved unsuitable. He says that Nkrumah fell because of his attempt to plant a foreign type of ideology. This was also Busia's folly.

⁸ Ibid., pp. 160-161.

⁹ Ibid., pp. 108-109.

¹⁰ Bentsi-Enchill Kwamena, *Institutional Challenges of our Time*, p. 15.

In short, Ghanaians have openly rejected both the eastern and the western types.¹¹

This writer goes on to explain that the failure of these foreign ideologies is not based on their intrinsic weakness but on the fact that they do not conform to an African situation. The adoption of anyone of them is not only dangerous to both the economic and political situation of the country but meaningless as well.

I am against neither socialism nor capitalism. After all, the meanings of both words are subject to elastic interpretations. If by adopting a 'Ghanaian capitalism' we can solve our problems and develop, I do not see anything wrong with it: likewise if we develop a 'Ghanaian socialism'.¹²

Even though Iddirisu seems to be backing the point of the rejection of foreign ideologies in this last statement, we understand him to mean that if, by coincidence, Africans come up with an ideology that is somewhat similar to the foreign ones it will not matter as long as it is based on values and problems peculiar to Africa. What most African writers object to, apparently, is for Africans to be ideologically manipulated and dominated and then to delude themselves that ideologies adopted in that way can meet the needs of Africa.

There is, however, a trend of thought which holds that an authentic African ideology will be closer to socialism than to capitalism. What has been described as African socialism is related to the African traditional communal living. In analysing the present problems and needs of Ghana Atta proposes that Ghana should go 'socialist' and not 'capitalist':

Indeed, unless the state intervenes directly or indirectly in investment in economy, in the long run the economy will remain in the hands of non-Ghanaians. From experience, however, non-Ghanaians are more interested in 'chopping Ghana small'. Since the inertia left by our colonial history is that of foreign domination of important sectors of the economy such as industry, trading, construction and mining, unless the government intervenes directly...¹³

... there will be no end to the present economic problems. This analysis makes it clear that an effective African ideology will have to accommodate a large-scale control of the economy by the governments in order to check on the domination of Africa by foreign investors.

Clark's discussion with American businessmen reveals the attitudes of some foreign investors and their ideological evaluations of state-owned business in Nigeria and other parts of Africa:

¹¹ Iddirisu, A., 'No Foreign Ideology!' *The Legon Observer*, Vol. VIII, No. 12, 15-28 June 1973, p. 280.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 280.

¹³ Atta J.K., 'Socialist-Capitalist Controversy: An Economic Appraisal', *The Legon Observer*, 24th March 1972, p. 129.

'Tell me', some big shot cut in. 'Why do all you new African states go for state ownership of business?'

'Oh, not really', I said.

'Of course so', another cut me short. 'I happen to know in Nigeria the railways, ports, power, mines and even broadcasting are run by government. And isn't that the pattern all over Africa and Asia today?'

'Don't you think those industries you have mentioned are too vital to leave in private hands?'

'A real communist fellow', someone muttered at the outskirts of the crowd about me.

'One thing you don't know—' I began.

'And what's that?' an impatient director snatched at my tongue.

'Well,' I said, 'those state industries you speak of were really opened by the British.'

'Oh the British?' Several there stamped their feet. 'Why couldn't they let the citizens themselves develop their own resources?'¹⁴

These American capitalists in their impatience see everything that is not capitalistic as communism. As Clark explains that the state-owned industries in Nigeria were opened by the British it becomes evident that if the new African states were to opt for a capitalistic system, it would mean that Africans as private citizens would compete with the British and other foreign investors for the control of these industries. It may, therefore, be true that it is not for socialistic reasons that African governments intervene directly in the control of important industries. This is done with a view to rescuing African industries from being dominated and exploited by foreigners.

Jones-Quartey takes a close look at the ideologies that were followed by Nkrumah in the immediate post-independence period in Ghana. Nkrumah, he says, was committed by his own declarations to make Ghana a socialist state. He also observes that Nkrumah's socialism appeared to be a half-way house such as Gaitskell and Company would have made of Britain if they had had a chance. There are, however, other observers who believe that Nkrumah had embraced communism. There are yet other African writers who believe that communism was completely irrelevant to the issues both in the active context of the struggle against imperialism and in the immediate post-independence period. Jones-Quartey, a college mate of Nkrumah, refutes suggestions that Nkrumah had adopted communism as follows:

Never have conditions in erstwhile 'British' West Africa even approached the stages in which communist infiltration and exploitation find such fruitful facilities, and it is doubtful whether a knowledge-

¹⁴ Clark J.P., *America, Their America*, London, Heinemann, 1964, pp. 128-129.

able West African patriot would invite this beast into the midst of his innocent country men just like that.¹⁵

The impression one gets from Jones-Quartey's analysis is that Nkrumah wanted to do away with the intolerable excesses of capitalism and that he did not embrace communism. Jones-Quartey says Nkrumah's foreign policy, his economic plans, and the techniques of his domination at home, all seem to indicate that in his overpowering ambitions for himself, for Ghana, and for Africa, he was determined to use any and every means from any source or system in the world to achieve those ambitions. By the same tokens and for the same reasons he would crush any kind of opposition that dared to cross his path:

It is this mixture of motives and systems that confuses the issues for so many observers both of his politics and of his economics, so that when Krushchev embraces him at the U.N. and he returns home to declare socialism a little more emphatically than before, he looks and sounds exactly like 'Little Brother'.¹⁶

Jones-Quartey also declares that Nkrumah's socialism was such as would make a dedicated socialist weep. A 'one man, one car' promise for Ghana could not have come from a socialist inspiration. Secondly, a new policy statement promising to raise the salaries of engineers, doctors, economists, technicians, agriculturists, statisticians and geologists, most of whom were already much above most paid workers in social and economic status was unsocialistic, unless the intention was to have these highly paid professionals turn their savings in future over to the socialist state. Jones-Quartey concludes that it was not socialism of any known kind that was practised by Nkrumah. It was a composite — wrapped fiercely around by the African Personality.

Apronti advances an argument which is slightly different from that of Jones-Quartey. He believes that Nkrumah was a socialist at heart. He maintains that the tragedy in Nkrumah's attempt to build socialism in Ghana was twofold. On the one hand was the problem of personnel, on the other was his own delay in attaining full commitment to the central doctrine of Marxist socialism, namely, the capture of the commanding heights of the economy. His efforts to convert his followers to socialism failed. He sees the problem as having been that of the bourgeois elite, true to reactionary educational training they had imbibed, turning their backs on socialism for selfish reasons.

All in all, Nkrumah died a great socialist. His perception of the polarity of capitalist and socialist forces was clear. He joined the ranks of those who say 'nonsense!' to any idea that Africa can

¹⁵ Jones-Quartey K.A.B., 'Kwame Nkrumah', pp. 6-7. (Unpublished paper by the Director of the Institute of Adult Education, University of Ghana, Accra.)

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 7.

do without 'isms', or that Africa can evolve an economic system that is neither capitalist nor socialist, or that there is some such thing as 'African socialism'.¹⁷

These two Ghanaian scholars differ in their assessment of the position Nkrumah took with regard to foreign ideologies. Whilst Apronti holds that Nkrumah died a 'great socialist', Jones-Quartey sees Nkrumah's socialism as having been a matter of expediency. There is, however, general agreement on the fact that the foreign ideologies that have been tried in Ghana and in Africa generally, whatever name they are given, have failed. This seems true even if, as Apronti says, Nkrumah's socialism failed because 'it is an axiom that socialism cannot be built without socialists'. The African label that is given to socialism does not redeem it from its foreignness. Apronti's view that Nkrumah was a great socialist is supported by what Nkrumah wrote of himself and socialism:

They (African Independent states) have chosen liberation and unification; and this can only be achieved through armed struggle under socialist direction.¹⁸

This is essentially the point that Jones-Quartey is making about Nkrumah's socialism being a type that would make dedicated socialists weep. Even though Nkrumah died a great socialist, Ghana was not a socialist state. Since African Heads of State have different brands of what they call 'African socialism' there is a possibility that this may be neither 'African' nor 'socialist'. What is of interest to the studies on cultural identity is that African reactions to 'African socialism' are in some cases doubtful acceptance and in others doubtful rejection.

B. POSTULATES OF DEMOCRACY IN AN AFRICAN SITUATION

1. General

Austin Ranney in his book, *The Governing of Men*, defines democracy as: a form of government organized in accordance with the principle of popular sovereignty, political equality, popular consultation and majority rule.¹⁹

In the light of this open definition, democracy can be practised in different forms. Almost all modern political systems claim to practise one form of democracy or the other. Most of the Eastern European states, including the USSR, claim to practise the 'real' democracy, based on the dictatorship of the proletariat, while their Western counterparts including the USA claim to be practising 'liberal democracy'. All the new African states also claim to be having their own brand of democracy.

¹⁷ Apronti Jawa, 'Nkrumah and the Building of Socialism', *The Legon Observer*, 5th May 1972, p. 208.

¹⁸ Nkrumah Kwame, *Revolutionary Path*, London, Panaf Books, 1973, p. 514.

¹⁹ Ranney A. *The Governing of Men*, New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston Inc., 1949, pp. 85-86.

In the analysis that follows we shall pay attention to what African writers have to say about their own democracy and how it is related to other democracies.

Assessing the politics of Ghana since independence, especially with regard to the failure of the first two constitutions that were modelled on the Western pattern, Adu Boaken writes to support a group of Africans who maintain that the Western model, that is the party-political parliamentary model, has failed. He supports the view that Ghanaians, and indeed other Africans, should rethink and fashion a new system of government which is more in tune with the African traditional models of social organization and administration.²⁰ A necessary prerequisite for the formulation of any new system of government should be a dispassionate, unhypocritical, and objective analysis of the causes of the failure of the parliamentary system.

In any case, it is only by studying the underlying causes of the failure of our two attempts at party-political parliamentary government that we can devise a system that will take full cognisance of our weaknesses and idiosyncrasies as well as our traditional modes of social and political organization, and only such a system will have any chance of success.²¹

Justice Kwamena Bentsi-Enchill who is one of the scholars who are spearheading the school of thought which maintains that foreign political institutions have failed in Africa says that at the attainment of independence Africans were overwhelmed and fascinated by the British political system to such an extent that they neglected the heart-searching questions of national identity:

What kind of people are we going to shape ourselves to become? What steps do we have to take to control our destiny and retain our self-respect? These questions remain with us today because our leadership at independence proved wholly unequal to the challenge. The heart-searching question of national identity was sidetracked with slogans about the African personality.²²

As an example he recalls how Article 153 in the new Ghana Constitution provides that 'the institution of chieftaincy together with its Traditional Councils as established by customary law and usage is hereby guaranteed.' The Nkrumah Constitution of 1960 included in the solemn declaration which the President was required to make before assuming office the statement 'that Chieftaincy in Ghana should be guaranteed and preserved'. It is interesting to note in passing that Lord Lugard was not saying something very different in his much condemned doctrine of

²⁰ Boaken Adu, 'The Changing Views on Sovereignty', *The Legon Observer*, 25th February 1972, p. 73.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

²² Bentsi-Enchill Kwamena, *Institutional Challenges of Our Time*, p. 10.

Indirect Rule. Only lip-service, however, was given to the declarations that the traditional councils should be maintained in the new system of government. The point made by Bentsi-Enchill is that if the desire to retain traditional institutions had been genuine, there should have been a willingness to reform and adapt these institutions to the needs of the time:

If you never consider reforming (them) then you are condemning (them) to obsolescence and practical irrelevance. And I would submit that we have not, as a people, squared up to the need to modernize those of our traditional institutions which we want to retain and preserve or guarantee.²³

These old institutions are reservoirs of a latent local energy and pride and they can be used as key forces to generate the drive required for rural transformation. Bentsi-Enchill points out that the Fanti Confederation of 1867 laid a good foundation for modern African statesmen to draw inspiration from. The articles of the Confederation provided for education, technical training, the promotion of industrial and agricultural pursuits, the development of the resources of the country and its general improvement. A study of the constitution of the Confederation shows how the Fanti elaborated in great detail the various functions of government — legislature, executive and judicial. After considering the effectiveness of the traditional African system of government, Bentsi-Enchill asserts:

Let me say in passing that in my view the traditional system of government represents a distinctive and creditable achievement in our culture. In an important sense we can claim, like the British, that we achieved the taming of monarchical absolutism in our traditional politics. There is an important elective principle in the appointment of chiefs that enjoins responsible choices and concern for excellence. And this is further reinforced by rules which permit destoolment of chiefs and thus emphasize a principle of accountability in leadership. These, indeed, are important merits.²⁴

It would seem that the African traditional system of government could be called democratic though different from the Western model of democracy.

One of the African scholars who stands for the rejection of parliamentary democracy is the Ghanaian Ambassador Joseph Appiah. Giving his last lecture in the series of the 'Annual J.B. Danquah Memorial lectures' on 20th February 1974, Appiah made a dramatic turn of his back against the parliamentary system and the party game. He called on Ghanaians to reject the parliamentary system because it had been tried by the two republics and on each occasion the governments were

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

overthrown. He holds that the system of party politics and parliament with a leader of opposition always finding fault with the government, is contrary to the nature of African tradition. Instead, Appiah suggests a presidential democracy which will be headed by a Super-Paramount Chief, — 'Super Nam or Nii, or Togbe'.²⁵ According to the 'Joe Appiah Constitution', there would be one President elected by popular ballot. All the election expenses would be borne by the state. The President as a candidate would stand as an individual on the platform of his manifesto. When elected he will appoint his own cabinet from the country. There will be a Council of State composed of representatives of the House of Chiefs and the representatives of the different sections of the population. This will constitute the Legislature. All laws will be referred to the nine Houses of Chiefs. If they accept the laws, the Bills will be passed. If not, there will be a referendum should the President feel strongly about the particular Bill. The President will be in office for two terms only. This will help solve the problem of African Presidents who remain in office for life if they are not removed by coups. Appiah says:

In my view, any attempt in this direction must proceed on the well-laid proposition that, as a people, we have certain time-honoured traditions and institutions by which our sires of old regulated their lives, long before the establishment of the white man's hegemony in these parts.²⁶

He submits that by a series of adaptations here and there, compatible with the changing conditions of today, a worthy constitution will emerge, sufficient and viable enough to sustain true democracy, while doing away with many of the evils and abuses of the past. He adds:

The battle cry of 'self-reliance' must include a return to those portions of our heritage which can still sustain us and make us true Africans that we ought to be instead of second-rate Europeans that we should never be.²⁷

Appiah also challenges the school of thought which holds that the white man's 'Parliamentary Democracy' which Africans inherited is flawless and that the flaw is not in the system but in the people themselves. This school of thought would have Africans go on trying the system as it is until the people have learnt to adapt themselves to it at some indefinite future. To these people Appiah says:

'Can the leopard ever change its spots?' Common experience teaches that borrowed clothes, unless trimmed and adapted to suite the physical features of the new wearer, can never sit well on him.²⁸

²⁵ Appiah Joseph Emmanuel, 'Let us reject Parliamentary System', *Ghana Confidential*, Vol. I, No. 11, January/February 1974, p. 1.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

According to Appiah, the idea of putting new wines into old bottles by copying from the British style at Westminster has not helped the Africans. The multiplicity of parties has not helped national unity. The partisan system is alien to the African way of life.

There are some African writers who expose the weaknesses of the Western model of democracy. Asare in his allegorical novel, *The Rebel*, portrays Shabani as a saviour who comes to introduce Western democracy to the people of Pachanga. Pachanga, supposedly an island off the coast of Africa, represents any of the African states. It becomes evident, however, in the process of the application of the imported pattern of democracy that there are problems to which Western democracy has no answers. When Ngurumo points out that his democratically elected government is going to be attacked by Mzee Matata, his political opponent who does not accept the results of the elections, Shabani says a democracy that is threatened has to protect itself. He advises Ngurumo to organize the most loyal of his supporters into a body-guard. Ngurumo is very much opposed to the idea of a body-guard because all men of Pachanga are armed. They all carry spears to guard against attack by wild animals. Ngurumo also realizes that if he is protected by a body-guard, the people of Pachanga may not like him and his rule. The protection of an unwanted government seems to contradict the principles of democracy. Under a strongly protected government, says Ngurumo, people will find it difficult to approach him for traditional consultation. This inability of the people to approach their leader defeats the purpose of democracy. Shabani, the Western democracy expert, wonders how Mzee Matata has been able to rule without a personal guard. The answer to this is:

'Because the people believed he had the support of the gods.'²⁹

Shabani then recalls that men have ruled all over the world from time immemorial with the support of the gods. As soon as they lost the support of what was known as the divine right, the assassinations began. Shabani also recalls that not very long ago, the President of the most powerful nation on earth was assassinated. This President had a very strong and well organized guard. This inference to the U.S.A.'s model of democracy failing to maintain President Kennedy in power after his election by a large majority of the population scares away not only Ngurumo but other Africans as well from the Western model of democracy. Indeed, Western democracy is not flawless as Asare demonstrates. Ngurumo's conclusion is:

'It seems that your democracy has its teething troubles and dangers.'³⁰

In Henshaw's *Dinner for Promotion*, Siphos ridicules the adoption and failure of Western democracy in the new African states. He says

²⁹ Asare Bediako, *Rebel*, London, Heinemann, 1969, pp. 126-128.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 127.

that their democratic Constitution guarantees equal poverty for all.³¹ The Western patterns of democracy in Africa have not improved the plight of the poor.

Writing on 'Foundations for Political Reconstruction in Nigeria', Awa contends that some Africans manifest their rejection of Western democracy by rigging or helping to rig elections and by using other types of device to by-pass the rules of the game. Even the modernizing elite group which openly expresses belief in the Western democratic ideal takes all kinds of action to defeat its operation in order to preserve its selfish interests.³²

In his short story 'The Voter', Achebe gives an illustration of the undemocratic application of Western democracy in Africa. Umuofia village belonged en masse to the People's Alliance Party, and its most illustrious son, Chief the Honourable Marcus Ike, was the Minister of Culture in the outgoing government which was pretty certain to be the incoming one as well. Nobody doubted that the Honourable Minister would be elected in his constituency. Opposition to him was like the proverbial fly trying to move a dunghill.³³ It is obvious that Marcus Ike had taken the necessary precautions to defeat the operation of a Western democratic pattern for his own selfish ends. To make this point clear, Achebe adds that during his first term of office Marcus Ike had bought himself two long cars and had just built himself the biggest house anyone had seen in those parts of the country. The infrastructure of the imported democracy has been so distorted as to prevent a free entry of new and informed aspirants and the exit of participants who have had their full tenure of office.

2. *The Party Question*

The attention of many Africans, especially in Ghana and Nigeria where the Western democratic experiments are being buried, is engaged in a genuine search for the common political values and a suitable political system. Divergent views are being expressed on the question of the party system that would suit the African temperament.

The supporters of the two-party system maintain that a study of modern democracies shows a long history of trial and error in evolving the system. A decade or so of the practice of this Western model of democracy by the new states is too short a period for judging the success and the failure of these experiments. The fear of the two-party supporters is that one-party states degenerate into an authoritarian political system. The idea, they say, that the one-party system should be adopted by

³¹ Henshaw James Ene, *Dinner for Promotion*, University of London Press, 1967, p. 72.

³² Awa E.O., 'Foundations for Political Reconstruction in Nigeria', *Inkenga*, No. 1, January, 1972, p. 61.

³³ Achebe Chinua, 'The Voter', *Girls at War and Other Stories*, London, Heinemann, 1972, pp. 11-12.

the new states in Africa because it is African is untrue. Neither in its nature nor in its postulates is it African. It is equally a borrowed hybrid as the two-party system:

The omnipresent and benevolent one-party system will not solve the heterogenous nature of the African political culture. Rather we must endeavour in our process of political socialization to listen to the various interest groups. The system that will effectively do this is the two-party system which gives each and every interest group a choice... The Tanzanian experiment which has tended to give the appearance of providing alternative choice of candidates during elections does not provide a solution. Oscar Kambona who was the right-hand man of the Tanzanian President went into political exile because he held divergent political views with the party... In a two-party system, his views could have found legitimacy in an alternative party.³⁴

It is argued that the presentation of more than one candidate in an election under a one-party system does not make for real political choice. By real political choice is meant not only the choice of candidates as in the Tanzanian experiment, but the choice of parties, policies, ideas and manifestos.

The argument against the two-party system is that these so-called parties are not parties at all. They are usually aggregations of family, village, tribal and friendly alliances hastily created for the purpose of getting power. A great number of party members are usually there for reasons which are not edifying: they are related to one or the other of the leaders by kinship, marriage, village, tribal or friendly ties, or they are simply awed by the intellectual reputation of one or the other of the leaders; or believing that they themselves are the most 'enlightened' men in their districts, and, therefore, the most potential parliamentary candidates, they have simply joined the party that was most likely to win.³⁵ In most cases the opposition parties are assembled on a similar variety of motivations and anticipations. Eric Mensah Otchere, writing on 'Who is the Ideal Ruler in Africa', suggests that the word 'opposition' be tentatively abolished and the opposition parties referred to as 'Left Wing' parties instead. He points out that the dictionary meaning of opposition is 'a body of persons opposing another body, especially the political party not in power'.³⁶ The *Legon Observer* Editor's reply to Otchere's attempt to interchange oppositionism in party politics with 'left-wingism' is that it is a simple-hearted idealism. As we know the background of real fights

³⁴ Emezi C.E. and Nwosu H.N., 'Problems of Democracy in New African States', University of Nigeria-Nsukka in the *Institute of African Studies Research Review*, Vol. 7, No. 3, 1971, University of Ghana, pp. 54-55.

³⁵ *The Legon Observer*, Editorial, Vol. VI, 19th November 1971, p. 4.

³⁶ Otchere Eric Mensah, 'Who is the Ideal Ruler in Africa', *The Legon Observer*, Vol. VI, 8th October 1971, p. 12.

between governing and opposition parties in the new states of Africa against which Otchere's suggestion is made, we feel that Otchere needs to understand that Africans will have to obey the rules of the game if they opt for party politics. The abuses of the opposition parties flow more from the temperament and attitudes of the people concerned than from the names of the parties as such.

Another stream of argument goes in support of the one-party system. This stream includes the elite in power in many African states as well as the neo-liberals in the West. The supporters of this system maintain that those who support the two-party system do so primarily in echo of the voices of the people of other lands who have used it successfully. Professor Awa of Nigeria asserts:

I think that our native temperament inclines us to the use of the single-party system and we might well embrace it formally and provide adequate safeguards for its use.³⁷

Awa's argument is that according to the system of African traditional societies if one does not belong to the nuclear ruling group of the chief and his elders or is not a supporter of it, one can belong to one or more of the other groups (e.g. age or professional groups) or may at least be a supporter of some of them. Those who belong to the peripheral ruling groups or merely support them may indeed be opponents of the nuclear ruling group. In this way, while they may be in opposition, they will at the same time exercise some form of power and will not feel wholly deprived of political opportunities. Unlike the two-party system which concentrates all the power on the 'ins', Awa says, the one-party system merged with the African traditional system allows for the decentralization of power.

Since single-party experiments in Africa have been totalitarian, undemocratic and anti-clerical, as some Westerners have observed, the coups have shown that Africans also disapprove of them. Whilst this assertion may be true of a number of cases in Africa, Awa's argument is that:

All single parties are not totalitarian nor is totalitarianism found only in single-party regimes.³⁸

Awa supports his argument with an example of Kemal Ataturk who deliberately established a single-party system in Turkey, using it mainly as a technique to integrate and Westernize the country. The party imposed no mystique on its members but rather Kemal provided it with a democratic ideology which resembled 19th century liberalism. At all times the party derived its power to govern from the majority it won at

³⁷ Awa E.O., 'Foundations for Political Reconstruction in Nigeria', *Inkenga*, Vol. 1, No. 1, January 1972, p. 66.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

elections and not from its character as the political elite. Another example is that of the Democratic Party in the south of the United States which is practically a single-party system but because of the institution of the primary, it functions more like the normal democratic party than as a Fascist party. Awa's conclusion, therefore, is that in several parts of Africa today the single-party system has been established deliberately to usher in a regime whose avowed objective is to fulfil a high social purpose for the nations involved and to integrate the society.

The exponents of the one-party system consider opposition to be an important ingredient of political life and therefore want it to be provided for in the one-party system. Awa says they prefer the presidential to the cabinet system of government. Members of parliament ought to be free to express their candid views on all motions and bills before the legislature, but the President should not succeed himself more than once, in order to obviate any tendency toward the monopolization of power by one man or one set of leaders.³⁹

Ekwensi gives the view of a common man to the party system in general. In *People of the City* the two leaders of a dance band have been invited to play for one of the Nigerian political parties before elections. As they discuss the attitude of the politicians at elections Sango says:

'I thought we'd finished with parties as from last week. What's the use of all this nonsense when we are being led by the National Committee for Justice? I hope this election does not create a split. I'd hate to see the politicians split up once again.'

The other one replies to this as follows:

'No... have no fear. They'll remain together, they won't split. You know how they act at election time. They make foolish promises, they abuse themselves. It's politics.'⁴⁰

This discussion was prompted by the then recent coal crisis which had broken out in the Eastern Greens, where twenty-one miners had been shot down by policemen under orders from 'the imperialists'. The shooting of the miners had become a cementing factor for the nation. The whole country had united and with one loud voice condemned the action of the British Government. Rival political parties had united in the emergency and were acting for the entire nation. The idea which comes out from Ekwensi's illustration is that political parties do not represent the interests of the nation. It would appear that masses of African people dislike the party system:

Why do politicians have to wait for a period of crisis before they can sink their selfish differences and unite? Why can it not

³⁹ Ibid., p. 68.

⁴⁰ Ekwensi Cyprian, *People of the City*, London, Heinemann, 1963, p. 83.

always be like this, what can we do to hold this new feeling? Even as he tortured himself with these questions he knew that as soon as the crisis was over the leaders would all go their different and opposite ways, quarrelling like so many market women.⁴¹

The image of the quarrelling market women brings out the displeasure and contempt with which the behaviour of politicians at elections is viewed by the un-Westernized African. Ekwensi's illustration represents the African's rejection not only of the two-party system in favour of a single-party one. In effect, Ekwensi says the partisan system does not serve the interests of Africa.

Ekwensi is part of the realistic stream of argument which is fast becoming the strongest force in some English-speaking African states. These hold that there can be politics and democracy without parties. The recent experiences with party politics have made many thinking Africans suspicious of parties. To many, political parties are instruments for subverting freedom and justice, the rule of law, and fundamental human rights. Writing on 'Politics without Parties', Bame of Ghana says:

'A no-party government may sound unworkable, even ridiculous, to those who are used to the Western type of democracy, in which there are always at least two political parties, either of them ready to form a government by replacing the other. But in the light of the experience of our current history, is the party system of government really suited to our temperament? Can we even afford it? Are all the political intrigues, bickering and dissension not really due to the fact that we have parties? Why else then the rigging of elections, the suppression of opposition, the passing of iniquitous detention (or, if you like, "security") laws? Are we really deceived by the quack theories that are put forward in support of the one-party system?'⁴²

Bame suggests that the election of members of Parliament be carried out by means of electoral colleges. The voters in each of these colleges elect one person to a bigger electoral college of the constituency. From this college, two or three, as the constitution may stipulate, will be elected to contest the seat for parliament at the general elections. This method ensures the democratic exercise of the franchise and the whims and fancies of some central committee of a party have no place. The election of the President may also proceed as follows. Members of Parliament elect two of their members to contest the presidency by a referendum. Thus, the entire body of citizens will have a say in the election of the President and the government. Alternatively, to avoid a

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 74.

⁴² Bame K.N., 'Politics without Parties', *The Legon Observer*, Vol. 1, No. 4, 19th August 1966, p. 7.

separate referendum, the election of the M.P.s and the President could be carried out simultaneously. Thus at general elections, a voter would cast two votes — one for a parliamentary candidate for his constituency, another for the presidential candidate. The constitution would have something to say about the presidential candidate who wins the presidency but loses at the constituency level.⁴³

What then? Which system is preferred in Africa — two-partyism, single-partyism or no-partyism? Are there already clear indications? Jones-Quartey concludes his article on 'One-Party States and the Role of Opposition in Contemporary Africa' by stating that Africa has not yet discovered its most suitable political and economic system or systems, and that the present condition of flux and upset is not one in which to determine that it should be this or that system and not another. He recommends a re-study of the social history of nations, the continuing re-study of revolutions and of the ideas of Africa's contemporary revolutionaries — not omitting Frantz Fanon and Julius Nyerere. Another source recommended for a re-study, which Jones Quartey erroneously leaves out, is the African traditional system of government. He, however, correctly argues that it is still too early for us to conclude that one-partyism is there to stay in Africa:

... the failure of federalism and multipartyism in Nigeria, say, and on the other hand, the success so far of one-partyism in the Ivory Coast — these two differential cases would tend to suggest that at least all the answers are not yet in.⁴⁴

What comes out clearly from the postulates of democratic patterns that are intended to meet the present day needs of the Africans is a rejection of the Western parliamentary democracy. There are, however, African writers who are for an adaptation of the Western model of democracy to African needs and conditions. The failure of some experiments which aimed at adapting foreign models to the African situation has disillusioned many people. Okara speaks of 'politicians with grins that do not reach their insides begging for votes'⁴⁵ in the same strain as he speaks of the general moral decay in society. It is mainly from this point of disillusionment with the past imported democratic experiments that the Africans are reassessing their values as a people. There is a growing feeling that rather than adapt Western models to the African situation, it is better for Africans to come up with traditional political cultural values and then adapt them to present-day needs. It is in this spirit that Appiah and others call for a complete rejection of the parliamentary system. As Appiah is well aware, his school of thought faces opposition mainly from the Westernized elite. For many years to come,

⁴³ Ibid., p. 8.

⁴⁴ Jones-Quartey K.A.B., 'One-Party States and the Role of the Opposition in Contemporary Africa', *The Legon Observer*, 18th December 1970, p. 8.

⁴⁵ Okara Gabriel, *The Voice*, London, Heinemann, 1970. p. 78.

it appears, Africa will be irrevocably divided into two main groups. The two principal partisan ideologies will be difficult to drown completely. However, the identification of the 'let us reject the parliamentary system' school of thought with the current cultural identity movement, throwing foreign ideologies and models overboard, may be the best solution to Africa's current political problems.

C. THE PROBLEMS OF ADMINISTRATION

A study of African writing reveals an awareness on the part of some Africans that a number of their administrative problems arise owing to the unsuitability of foreign patterns which are still in operation in the post-independence era. Ideological restructuring of society, it seems, will have to include a reshuffle and rejection of the colonial administrative patterns as well.

In Aluko's *One Man, One Matchet*, Udo Akpan, the District Officer, considers, for instance, post-mortems as one of the things which require re-examination in the peculiar circumstances of African administration. To illustrate his point he gives an example of a man who is run over by a lorry. This injured man dies instantaneously. In spite of the fact that several other people witness the accident, the hard-pressed doctor, with a queue of dying patients waiting for medical attention, spends his literally precious time cutting up the corpse of the accident victim. After toying with a few organs he sews up the corpse and then writes in his medical language a report on the cause of death. The law which was inherited from the colonial masters insists on post-mortem examinations and this has something to do with possible litigation arising out of the accident.⁴⁶ Udo believes, like many other people, that it is a crime to leave the living to die and to waste precious time toying with the dead in these circumstances. Besides, post-mortems in general violate the great sanctity with which the African holds the corpse of a dead relative.

In a lighthearted manner typical of the *Onitsha Market Literature*, post-mortem examinations are cartooned. At some stage of the festival, Mr. Okoronkwo breaks the crowd where the king dances, and shoots the king with his pistol. The gun does not wound the jubilant king, but rather kills five other innocent spectators. Mr. Okoronkwo tries to run away but is held by the people. 'The dead ones are carried away to the public mortuary for post-mortem examination as usual.'⁴⁷ Whilst Aluko shows that some Africans regard it as an insult and a crime for a few doctors to have to fiddle with the dead corpses whilst their patients die unattended, the *Onitsha Market Literature* excerpt, on the other hand, reveals the senselessness of the practice.

Another example of the unsuitability of the British Civil Service

⁴⁶ Aluko T.M., *One Man, One Matchet*, London, Heinemann, 1964, pp. 192-193.

⁴⁷ Obiechina E.N., *Onitsha Market Literature*, London, Heinemann, 1972, p. 40.

regulations when applied in an African situation is that of the disqualification of the civil servants from politics:

'We are all disqualified by the General Orders from discussing publicly our national affairs. General Orders — this bible of the Civil Service — was written by expatriates who had the British Public Service at the back of their minds. In Britain the civil servant does not engage in politics.'⁴⁸

Udo emphasizes the fact that the British Civil Servant does not have to engage in politics because there are literally hundreds of thousands of fellow Britons who are outside the Civil Service and who are available to engage in politics both at the national and the local government levels. The British Civil Servant can afford to sit at his desk to carry out his own assignment, that of implementing policy decisions. In Africa, at the granting of independence, the best brains of the country, with a few exceptions, were all in the Civil Service. In such circumstances Africa could not afford with its limited resources in educated manpower to have the mouths of the civil servants padlocked while second-rate and sometimes semi-literate men were saddled with the very important duty of legislating and taking executive decisions for the State. Udo's suggestion is that civil servants should make their views known publicly on matters on which they are by qualification and experience competent to express views.⁴⁹

In *No Longer at Ease*, Achebe portrays Mr. Green as an arrogant expatriate civil servant who complains that there are too many holidays in Nigeria. He says that in Nigeria he gets four months' instead of two weeks' leave in a year. Obi reminds Mr. Green that the service regulations in the administration in Nigeria are a colonial legacy:

'It is not the fault of Nigerians', said Obi. 'You devised these soft conditions for yourselves when every European was automatically in the senior service and every African automatically in the junior service. Now that a few of us have been admitted into the senior service, you turn round and blame us.'⁵⁰

It should be believed that Udo realizes the challenge Africans have of changing the civil service regulations to suit the interests of the Africans instead of having a few senior service black men enjoy the 'soft conditions' which were designed for the white senior service men in colonial days.

Aluko, in *One Man, One Matchet*, allows Stanfield and Udo to enter into an argument on the appropriateness of the application of the British judicial system in Africa. Stanfield claims that no one can find fault with British democracy and the British sense of justice and fair

⁴⁸ Aluko T.M., *One Man, One Matchet*, p. 193.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 194.

⁵⁰ Achebe Chinua, *No Longer at Ease*, pp. 153-154.

play. True to his national identity, Stanfield argues that the British judicial system is the best in the world. It is the one thing that the world will remember about the British.⁵¹ To illustrate the absurdity of the British sense of fair play and justice Udo cites the example of how everyone in the British administration failed to rid the country of the curse of Benjamin Benjamin, a ruffian and spiv, for over two years until Olowo, an Ipaja man who had not heard of the 'British sense of fair play and justice', got rid of the common enemy by shooting him. After Olowo had shot his enemy he did not want to live. He turned his own gun on himself. The British Administration did not allow him to die. He was taken to hospital, his neck was cut open and the bullet was removed. He was given the best medical treatment in the country and was nursed back to health. After all the care and attention, true to 'the British sense of justice and fair play', Olowo was to be hanged. This is the kind of justice and 'fair play' Africans are supposed to copy from the British and give up their own traditional system. Udo reminds Stanfield of the effectiveness of the African system:

Before you came to this country with Pax Britannica, a citizen of proved anti-community activities like Benjamin Benjamin was easily disposed of. He just vanished.⁵²

Aluko cartoons the fact that African administration has to be patterned on that of the British. His attitude of scorn is evident when he tells of Udo as the African District Officer having to spend most of his leave in England attending a six weeks' conference on African administration in Oxford.⁵³

Aluko also draws attention to the fact that many of the British officials and advisors in Africa are agents of the importation of British administrative models into Africa. The belief of many of them is that since parliamentary democracy took eight hundred years to evolve, all its administrative patterns have to be drilled onto the new African administrators. Whilst on one hand British experts and advisors hold that 'parliamentary democracy... is one great contribution that our country has made to civilization',⁵⁴ there is now a growing number of African administrators whose bitter experience has taught them 'that whatever brand of democracy we import into this country we must make sure that we sift out the seed of the disease that will otherwise choke to death the new freedom from imperialism...'⁵⁵ Through Udo, Aluko discusses the tragedy of African lawyers who take advantage of the inefficiency and corruption of the police, the ignorance of the masses and the woefully inadequate number of Crown Councils, to handle cases to

⁵¹ Aluko T.M., *One Man, One Matchet*, p. 186.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 187.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 189.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 196.

the advantage of individuals who embezzle public funds and enrich themselves at the expense of the public. He maintains that British democratic institutions would work in a society where the State Attorney and the officers of peace are adequate and alive to their responsibilities. In some cases, the application of British institutions in Africa, Aluko asserts, is nothing short of crime against a new nation.⁵⁶

Ramshed Ghadamosi, the Nigerian Commissioner for Economic Development, is one of the African administrators who are trying to find new development strategies for Africa as his words reflect:

With independence came the notion, misconceived as some of us are finding out now, that you can only develop a country through the process of industrialization.⁵⁷

It is, therefore, not only in the field of administration that Africans are rejecting foreign patterns and are looking for new and local ones, but this covers even the general framework of economic development. Concerning local planning in Nigeria, Ghadamosi states that:

Lagos is already an urban disaster; an inheritance of colonial days.⁵⁸ He traces the stages of the growth of Lagos and the reasons for adopting the Western pattern of development. Some Africans are discovering that it is necessary for them in determining their future to redefine the concepts of 'progress' and 'development'. In Soyinka's *The Lion and the Jewel*, a critical discussion ensues between Sidi and Chief Baroka:

Sidi: The house . . . seemed . . . empty.

Baroka: Ah I forget. This is the price I pay
Once every week, for being progressive.
Prompted by the school teacher, my servants
Were prevailed upon to form something they call
The Palace Workers' Union. And in keeping
With habits — I am told — of modern towns,
This is their day off.

Sidi: Is this also a day off
For Baroka's wives?

Baroka: No, the madness has not gripped them yet.
Did you not meet with one of them?⁵⁹

In cases such as this even hardly schooled people realize that for the madness of 'being progressive' and the emulation of the so-called 'modern

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 195.

⁵⁷ Ghadamosi Ramshed, 'Lagos is an Urban Disaster', *African Development*, June 1974, p. 13.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 13.

⁵⁹ Soyinka Wole, *The Lion and the Jewel — Five Plays*, Ibadan, 1964, pp. 130-131.

towns' Africans are paying a heavy 'price'. It is not only the problem of 'unemployment'⁶⁰ and the congestion such as Lagos is experiencing today that plague the African states, the pseudo-socialists prevail over the Chiefs to change African social and economic organization in order to establish foreign institutions such as the 'Palace Workers' Union'. There is no doubt that the thinking of the Africans, who are now searching for new development models for Africa, is conditioned by the current problems Africa has inherited from Europe and by the alarming proportions these problems have reached in the Western countries themselves.⁶¹

What some Africans find unbearable and completely incompatible with their aspirations in the British administration is the evolutionary or gradualist theory of development. The policy of many foreign advisors to independent Africa is that at best it will take more than half a century for African states to become truly viable. This policy is more evident in the attitudes and policies of the British than in their verbal statements. Aluko's perceptive eye in *Chief the Honourable Minister* diagnoses the troubles between the Afromacolese cabinet and Mr. Harrington, Director of Public Works, as arising from the general Englishman's dogged attachment to perfection. He says that English people will stick to the perfect solution to any problem even if it means waiting for the whole century for that perfect solution.⁶² There is, of course, an awareness on the part of some Africans that this British gradualist policy can be part of their delaying tactics as well. When the Afromacolese Prime Minister orders Mr. Harrington to say how long it will take for an Afromacolese to become his deputy, it becomes clear that Theo George, whom Mr. Harrington designates as 'the most senior of the boys', will only become the first Afromacolese Director of Public Works after sixty years.⁶³ It is also clear that Mr. Harrington has adopted what some Africans call a 'you will never get there' policy. It is from these experiences that Africans conclude that the foreign guides to African development do not share the same feelings and aspirations with them.

Views have also been expressed by some African writers to suggest that Africans should invent their own administrative system which will suit local conditions and their cultural values. Agunwa gives one such example in which he describes the Korofo system of discipline as a political procedure which was invented by Mr. Adigwe, the chairman of the Ndigwe Patriotic Union. Anyone wishing to speak during the debating session had to hold the Korofo, and if there was a clash about

⁶⁰ Aluko T.M., *Chief the Honourable Minister*, London, Heinemann, 1970, p. 84. Unemployment is described by Aluko as the disease of the industrialized, so-called developed countries.

⁶¹ For these problems see Note 8 in the Introduction and the first section of this chapter.

⁶² Aluko T.M., *Chief, the Honourable Minister*, p. 42.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

its possession, the Korofo officer resolved it. This is how order was maintained at the general meetings of the union. Insignificant as the 'Korofo system' may be to many people, Agunwa has this to say about it and Mr. Adigwe:

It was his own contribution to the evolution of chairmanship that whoever spoke in his 'parliament' held this 'rod of authority', the Korofo. It worked marvellously well for it was that alone that converted the mob of their meetings into something near order. He invented this system; and must be mentioned when great inventors like Newcomen, Stephenson, or Newton are mentioned.⁶⁴

The point Agunwa is making with this example is far more important than the example itself since it embraces both the idea that the inventions of importance, especially in the field of political administration, have not been a monopoly of the whites and that Africans are capable of producing their own administrative models instead of continuing to sing praises only to the foreign inventors.

The search for new democratic ideological and administrative models for Africa which is now under way is a response to the discovery that many things have gone basically wrong and that a new approach is needed. This search defies the imperialist dogma⁶⁵ that Western democracy and the parliamentary system are the only valid ways of governing and that they constitute the only worthwhile model for the training of an indigenous elite and development in general.

⁶⁴ Agunwa Clement, *More Than Once*, London, Longmans, 1967, pp. 5-6.

⁶⁵ Nkrumah Kwame, *Revolutionary Path*, London, Panaf Books, 1973, p. 452.

CONCLUSION

As we announced in the introduction, the main purpose of this study has been to detect political meaning of the images in the African cultural affirmations and to show how these images influence the relations of the Africans with the Europeans. Attention has also been given to the indirect meaning of statements Africans make about non-African societies. Such statements are meant to reflect the cultural values Africans wish to uphold.

Taking as an example African values with regard to sex, marriage and family life, we have attempted to interpret statements such as that of Dehinwa's grandmother in Soyinka's *The Interpreters*,

'A child is a beautiful thing, have it... We have never been ashamed of children,'¹...

as an indication of Africans' disapproval of European methods of birth control and an affirmation of a cultural value Africans are not ashamed of. This societal value of pride in having children comes up to affect inter-state relations. When Africans deplore the attitude of some Western donor countries and agencies which insist on birth control as part of their terms for giving aid they are, in fact, rejecting a foreign cultural value which is being imposed on them as part of a development model.

Another interesting case of Africans rejecting cultural domination is that which was revealed by the split in the United Nations over the population plan at the September 1974 Bucharest World Population Conference. This split showed to what extent international understanding becomes difficult to achieve owing to a lack of knowledge, by many United Nations members, of other people's cultural values. The pro-natalist policies of Africa, Latin America and some socialist states, which are completely out of line with the United Nations Plan, may be better understood from a multicultural nature of the United Nations than from the U.N. bloc or coalition system approach.² This study reveals that there are many instances where the difference in the cultural values societies uphold affect inter-state co-operation. It is, therefore, possible that with the impending change in the African development models and goals, as is evident in the Yaoundé III Convention negotiations in which Africans are trying to determine their position vis-à-vis the E.E.C. and in the other African cultural assertions, there is likely to be a corresponding

¹ Soyinka Wole, *The Interpreters*, London, Heinemann, 1970, p. 106.

² Hawkes Nigel, 'Split over Population Plan by U.N.', *The Observer*, 25th August 1974, p. 4.

change in the structure, role, objectives and functions of some international institutions. Little progress has been made by international institutions in accommodating the validity of the cultural diversity of the newly independent states which were colonies at the time of the inception of the idea of world co-operation. On this basis, as the Black Renaissance Movement of Nigeria asserts, many so-called 'world'³ bodies still do not deserve the appellation.

One of the limiting factors to the understanding of African political behaviour is the use of concepts and methodology which do not penetrate into the underlying structures of African society. Our approach may be said to be very subjective, which is true, but the results of this approach may be more revealing and meaningful in terms of both the validity and veracity of facts, than those claimed to be more objective, that result, for instance, from quantitative content analysis. Even though our study is not in line with the prevailing opinions on methodology among empirical social science researchers with regard to sampling, the use of questionnaires, and statistical quantification of results, our contention is that it is necessary to use other methods which may reveal the underlying structures behind decision-making and the formulation of foreign policy objectives in Africa. Moreover, past experience shows that it is difficult to eliminate subjectivity in the exercise of formulating the conceptual framework and variables that precedes the so-called objective quantification of data by the empirical social science researcher. For instance, it is doubtful if the 'Fieldwork procedure', the 'Data collecting procedure' and other thoroughly worked out research recommendations in Professors Le Vine and Campbell's *Ethnocentrism: Theories of Conflict, Ethnic Attitudes and Group Behaviour*, provide more effective study tools of African society than a content analysis of images Africans have of themselves. Some of the questions asked and concepts defined are completely irrelevant to the African situation. This is so in spite of the authors' admission that the list of 'concepts of aggression' is 'arbitrarily ordered according to Western categories' and should therefore be translated from English to the vernacular.⁴ However scientific this method is said to be, it does not do justice to the study of a continent different from that which produces these concepts. It is also very difficult to see society in totality through the use of interviews.

In this study our experience has been that the different authors do not just give descriptions of individual persons. A person is a representative of a general phenomenon that author has intuitively felt is important. For instance, Achebe's description of Obi in *No Longer at Ease*, or Soyinka's description of Dr. Fasesi in *The Interpreters* are genuine representations of the identity crisis of the Western-trained African

³ See Part II Chapter I, Note 31.

⁴ Le Vine, Robert A., and Campbell, Donald T., *Ethnocentrism: Theories of Conflict, Ethnic Attitudes and Group Behaviour*, New York, John Wiley & Sons, 1972 pp. 251-296.

elite.⁵ A content analysis of this kind of source material, therefore, may tell the yet untold features of African society or any society for that matter. It is in the light of this advantage that Collingwood recommends this kind of source material as it throws light on the climate of people's thoughts better than other sources.

From the material we have analysed there is evidence that the attainment of political independence by the former colonial territories did not end the economic stranglehold which colonial powers and their allies have over them. Economic viability is still a target which African states have not reached. Likewise, cultural liberation has not yet been attained. Although the industrial giants of today make protestations of goodwill and often back their words with offers of economic assistance, there is no doubt, assert African writers, that they have little or no interest in seeing any genuine initiative in economic development on the part of their former colonies. The post-colonial struggle for total economic and cultural emancipation manifests itself in the cultural identity movement.

It is worth noting that the African cultural identity movement we speak of does not exist as an institutionalized movement with a constitution, definite membership and headquarters, etc., what we refer to are current self-assertions that have to do with identity, and the growing self-awareness of the African people in the post-independence era. In this study African cultural identity has been analysed as a movement that manifests itself in many ways. Our study has been strictly based on African cultural identity assertions as revealed in current African writing.

Our treating African identity assertions as a movement stems from our having ascertained that they are calculated assertions that have definite objectives though not yet formalized. Opoku, for instance, verbalizes these objectives as he stresses the necessity for an African identity as follows:

What needs to be most emphatically stressed is that all people have a mission to be themselves, and this truth is appreciated only when there is self-awareness. We must assert ourselves in every aspect of life or be prepared to face total obliteration of our souls, reduced to mere empty shadows standing at the sidelines and watching those who have chosen to assert themselves. The task of our generation is boldly to think of ourselves and clearly to decide where we want to go and to choose the road that will take us there. We shall have to sweep aside all relics of our past — products of a mind chained to things extraneous — and to review and build for the future.⁶

⁵ Already analysed in Part II, Chapter I.

⁶ Opoku Kofi Asare, 'Independence of the Mind', A mimeographed paper, Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, 1970, p. 8.

It is striking that almost at every point of these assertions, the Western societies are seen as not innocent of machinations to exploit African societies in disguised forms. These societies are viewed as attempting to maintain their old position of dominance and that of the dependence of their former colonies economically and culturally. What, however, is a major aspect of our findings is that some Africans have diagnosed their post-independence problems as arising from what has been called, for want of a better term, self-colonization. More important than economic independence is the independence of the mind. The economic and cultural dependence of African countries on Western societies is seen as a mere reflection of the fact that political independence did not give the Africans full control of their minds. Many African writers have made this diagnosis.

The fact that in almost every aspect of national endeavour our first impulse is to go outside the borders of our country to seek help is evidence of a lack of sufficient faith in ourselves which betrays a mind not yet free, for we do not show that we have laid our hands on the greatness which lies in our cultural heritage.⁷

Part II of this study shows that in spite of attempts by African nationalists to re-establish and to re-evaluate the self-image of an African as being capable of solving local problems, some Africans have continued to look outside their society for solutions. The colonial past has affected the self-conceptualization of many African leaders who, in running personal and state affairs, subject themselves and their society to Euro-American values. This low self-worth evaluation some Africans have of themselves manifests itself in their ready acceptance of foreign development models without relating them to local conditions and the crazy rush by some segments of the society to surround themselves with 'the enslaving things of Europe'. With such a dependent frame of mind many politically independent African societies accepted a dependent existence and inhibited the magnitude of changes that could result from adopting a new frame of reference. The economic dependence of Africa is, therefore, seen as merely one of the visible signs of this dependent living. Many African scholars now affirm that 'psychological emancipation is not as easily attainable as the ritual of granting political freedom'.⁸

⁷ Ibid., p. 3.

⁸ Tunteng P. Kiven, 'Political Freedom and Mental Colonization', *Transition*, No. 44, Accra, Ghana, p. 9. Oginga Odinga in his book, *Not Yet Uhuru*, expresses the same idea when he says, 'Decolonization is not a matter of a new constitution and new faces in the government, it is a matter of liberating attitudes'. To him Uhuru (freedom) is a matter of 'dealing with poverty', and it is not yet uhuru because the elite — 'easily seduced by trappings of power', and separated from the masses by 'the stifling effect of colonial education which castrates one's mind if one is not strong enough' have forgotten the people they should be serving. (*Africa Report*, March 1968, p. 48.)

There is no doubt that the African cultural identity movement seeks to put an end to the worship of foreign gods and to project to the world values distinctly African. For instance, viewing names as simple and obvious symbols of identity, Africans in the ex-colonial period are shedding their European given names in order to assert their independence and to reassert their own cultural identity. In the Belgian Congo, now renamed Zaïre, President Mobutu recently followed the example of other African leaders, not only by changing his own Christian given names, but by legally outlawing all such names in the country and fixing penalties for any priest who baptized a child with any but a Zairian name.⁹ The reappearance of the long-submerged names, e.g. Ghana, Mali, Zambia, marks the self-conscious identification of the Africans with their remote past.

Similarly, the popularity of modernized African national attire and an increasing rejection of European clothes and styles by some Africans challenge the phenomenon of colonial cultural psychology which is apparent in the trousers and the old Mother Hubbard dress coming to connote higher moral values than the loin cloth and the woman's lapa.¹⁰ Foreign values pertaining to physical appearance, language, food and eating habits, music and games, attitudes to work, sex, marriage and children are being challenged with a view to upholding local values and adapting to their own physical, psychological and cultural requirements whatever has come from outside African society. This is a strategy for changing the puppet nature of African states at the time when the former masters are supposed to have relinquished power. This is also a general re-evaluation of the African self-image.

African states do not see themselves as truly independent. When President Kenyatta, in July 1974, decreed the replacement of English by Kiswahili as the national and official language in Kenya, the impression he gave was that African states are yet to become independent. His words were:

The basis of any independent Government is a national language. We are an independent nation, and we can no longer continue aping our former colonizers.¹¹

African cultural assertions are increasingly being made by the moderate statesmen such as Kenyatta. His tone reveals determination and impatience. To the people who say the time is not yet ripe for his government's decision he says:

⁹ Isaacs Harold R., 'Basic Group Identity: The Idols of the Tribe', Massachussetts Institute of Technology, 1974, p. 40. (A seminar paper at the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.)

¹⁰ Herskovits Melville J., *The Human Factor in Changing Africa*, New York, A. A. Knopf, 1962, p. 206.

¹¹ 'Africa Survey', *Africa Magazine*, No. 37, September 1974, p. 54.

To hell with such people! Those who feel they can't do without English can as well pack up and go.¹²

Although Kiswahili may not be the ethnic language of all Kenyans, it is Kenya's language of unity and nationhood, for it is generally understood by the masses of Kenya. Kiswahili is now widely spoken in several East and Central African countries, by about eleven million people. Its introduction as the official language of Kenya will not only affect Kenyan politics and social life, it might enhance greater linguistic and cultural co-operation between African countries. Indeed, the general re-evaluation of the African self-image is bound to have far-reaching results both for the Africans and non-Africans.

Chapter II gives reflections of some Africans' despair and disillusionment with political corruption and bribery which is a menace in Africa today. Political corruption in Africa is traced to the political instability, the lack of checks and balances in the inherited political culture, and the worship of money which Africans regard as an out-group value. In this context the cultural identity movement seeks to emancipate the African from economic exploitation as well as from the self-imposed enslaving practices copied from Western societies.

The images African authors hold of Christianity are far from being positive as they vividly see the Europe-oriented religion as a threat to the independence and unity in Africa. The search for the independence of African Churches which started simultaneously with the political liberation movements still goes on. The parcelling up of Africa into rival denominations breaks up society into meaningless units and is indeed one of the obstacles to the formation of united and independent African nation states. Very many politically liberated Africans are still chained to the West, not only for financial assistance but also for the domination of their relationship with God by Western patterns. Likewise, Christian education is being denounced for producing good Baptists, Anglicans, Catholics and Muslims, and not good African citizens who regard themselves as Nigerians, Ghanaians, Zambians, etc. Obviously the over-identification of Christianity with Western culture and its apparent incompatibility with African cultural values exposes it to ridicule. The white missionaries are said to have come to proclaim a racist God, since they were associated with and sometimes supported by, colonial and racist governments and since some of them also lived as racists. This 'white man's god', as against the god of all humanity, is an enemy to all things African. The Africans' rejection of Western culture understandably includes that of the Western god.

Many Africans fail to conceive how tribalism could be said to be more of a threat to African nationhood than Christian denominational rivalry and hostility in Northern Ireland is a threat to peace in the United Kingdom and other parts of the world. Attitudes such as this

¹² Ibid., p. 54.

are likely to affect the religious policies of African states and to change the essence and practice of Christianity in Africa and probably elsewhere as well. Certainly, the superiority once claimed by Christianity to African and other religions is vehemently being challenged.

Our study gives evidence that in the post-independence period political and ideological problems have engaged the thoughts of some members of the African elite. In their writing Africans reject foreign ideologies and are beginning to think out their own ideology and political systems. Their disillusionment with party politics and other experiments with the Western democratic institutions has made some thinking Africans reject parliamentary democracy. On the basis of the present situation in Africa and the political assertions, especially in Ghana and Nigeria, Africa may have a complete break with the Western systems and ideologies. Even the once popular one-party states are now becoming a passing phase in Africa, not only because the coups are proving totalitarian single-partyism unacceptable, but because they are not based on African cultural values. The future constitutions are likely to be modelled on a traditional style which will accommodate the interests of all sections of the society and do away with the partisan system altogether. The cultural identity assertions throw foreign ideologies and political patterns overboard in favour of the traditional adaptations suited to the African temperament and present needs and conditions. The case in point is the recent experiment of the Zairian Constitution which seems to be in line with the policy of authenticity and a rejection of imported forms of democracy (if pursued to its logical conclusions) which most African states may adopt in future.

This study has also attempted to explain how and why African leaders, after winning political freedom, accepted a development philosophy and strategy incompatible with the new framework which sought to enable Africa to control her destiny. The Africans' reverting to the old frame of reference and destiny defined in terms of the 'former aggressor' meant victory for the former colonial masters and failure for the independence movement. Even though the old and the new, the dependent and independent, frames of reference have co-existed with glaring contradictions responsible for schizophrenic African political behaviour, the current rejection of foreign models for development and a call to African states to be self-reliant and self-supporting should be seen as an attempt by Africans to regain what was lost not only during years of colonialism but at independence. In other words, the view that Africa can only be emancipated by self-generated viable economic co-operation among African countries should have been part and parcel of the Nationalist Movement programme notwithstanding the 'Seek ye first the political Kingdom' strategy.

The current identity assertions are indicative of the fact that some elements of African society have learned and are learning not to look

outside and away from themselves for solutions, remedies and even sustenance.

In his book, *Africa Unbound*, Alex Quaison-Sackey, an African 'statesman with a broad grasp of world affairs', maintains that the African Personality must continue to be asserted because the voice of Africa, uttered through her sons and daughters, must draw attention to the injustices and the oppression suffered over the centuries by the African peoples. He says those who claim to have heard enough are the ones who do not wish the balance to be redressed, the past to be expurgated, the future to be different.

They do not, in short, wish Africa to assume its rightful place in the assembly of nations. But I submit that the tale is not yet fully told, the balance has yet to be struck. Although the main outlines of the situation have been published, a psychological revolution is still needed before Africans and their former oppressors can come to a full understanding of the new era that is dawning. The fact that Africa was oppressed and has now recovered her freedom must sink deeply into the consciousness of the world before we can pass on to the next phase of world history.¹³

An evaluation of the African cultural identity affirmations reveals that Africa's determination is to rid the continent of the remnants of colonialism evident in the post-colonial 'colonial' patterns of thought and behaviour which still affect both the whites and Africans. The African identity movement is not imbued with a desire of vengeance. If it were so, the white man would have found it difficult or even impossible to remain in Africa until now, and many independent African states would not have continued, as they obviously have, to maintain friendly links with Europe and the Europeans. The point is, of course, that the Africans wish to liquidate not the Europeans themselves but the system of colonialism and cultural domination they introduced into Africa, and when that is accomplished to some degree, Africa will be much more able than perhaps she is at present to take an impartial, objective attitude toward the West.¹⁴ The most important aim of the African cultural assertions, which incidentally is also the aim of our study, is to improve Africa-Europe or black-white relations.

Attention has already been drawn to basic contradictions that become apparent as Africans define the relations that should exist between them and European states, and as they attempt to reconcile industrialization to cultural identity. It is, however, disturbing that in many cases the visible display of African identity in the Africanization of names, the adoption of African dress, etc., remains superficial and is not accompanied by a far-reaching restructuring of African society. There is no real desire

¹³ Quaison-Sackey Alex, *Africa Unbound*, London, André Deutsch, 1963, pp. 173-174.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 173.

visible yet in many countries to do away with the privileges of the elite and to fight poverty. There are no visible efforts by some eloquent exponents of African identity to translate the cultural identity quest into policy, research (e.g. centre for intermediate technology) etc. Attempts of real infra-structural transformation of society, such as Nyerere's Ujamaa experiment, are still very scarce.

This study does not claim to solve African problems. It merely identifies the current cultural movement in Africa with its consequent influence on international relations. Richard Wright describes post-independence problems and the identity crisis of the elite in both positive and negative terms — a precarious and hopeful struggle.

THE WESTERNIZED AND TRAGIC ELITE
OF ASIA, AFRICA, AND THE WEST INDIES —
the lonely outsiders who exist precariously
on the clifflike margins of many cultures — men who are
distrusted, misunderstood, maligned, criticized
by Left and Right, Christian and pagan —
men who carry on their frail but indefatigable shoulders
the best of two worlds — and who,
amidst confusion and stagnation,
seek desperately for a home for their hearts:
a home which, if found,
could be a home for the hearts of all men.¹⁵

¹⁵ Wright Richard, *White Man Listen*, New York, Anchor Books, Doubleday, 1964 (Dedication Note), p. vi.

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